



# St Helens College Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report

2023 - 24

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## Principal's Introduction

St Helens College is an inclusive and increasingly diverse and growing community. Our staff and students bring a wide range of experiences and backgrounds to the College from across the Liverpool City Region. We celebrate, support, and thrive on our differences, respecting and valuing the richness of individual experiences.

Through excellent education and training opportunities, we strive to transform the lives of almost 7,000 students and apprentices annually, working diligently to address barriers to success through extensive support systems.

During 2023/2024, an increasing number of our students were living in socially deprived areas within the two boroughs. Our focus has remained steadfastly on improving the social mobility of our students and apprentices through education and training. The number of students attending college who may be impacted by such challenges continues to grow. Therefore, our work on strategies to support all students to achieve, and our work on social mobility, is ever more important. We continue to provide opportunities for high-quality work-related activities, overseas study trips, access to competitions, and study-enhancing visits, experiences that many of our students might not have had access to before.

We are proud that the College has achieved the Investors in Diversity 'Silver' award accredited by the National Centre for Diversity, underlining our commitment to FREDIE (fairness, respect, equality/equity, diversity, inclusion, and engagement). We continue to maintain a strong focus on embracing equity, celebrating diversity, and fostering inclusion in all aspects of our work.

We work tirelessly to ensure that no students or apprentices are left behind, preparing them to be active and engaged citizens of a growing and multiculturally diverse region. Whilst we have achieved many of our goals, we recognise that there is still work to be done to close achievement gaps, diversify our workforce, and ensure colleagues are well-supported in a fully inclusive environment.

We will continue to make decisions about our curriculum, estate, facilities, and recruitment processes that reinforce our commitment to addressing inequalities and fostering inclusive growth and position the College as a positive agent for change within the region.

Simon Pierce  
CEO/Principal

## **St Helens and Knowsley Context**

St Helens College is a general Further Education College situated in Merseyside, established in December 2017, following a merger between St Helens College and Knowsley Community College. It operates across five sites: St Helens Town Centre Campus, St Helens STEM Centre Campus, Knowsley Main Campus (Stockbridge Lane), IAMTech Campus and the Green Energy Skills Centre.

The College serves the two boroughs of Knowsley and St Helens, which are the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> most deprived in England. Prior educational attainment in the area is lower than the national level. Both boroughs have increasing levels of ethnic diversity and high levels of ill health.

The College offers a broad and deep curriculum in all sectors including education programmes for young people, adult learning programmes, apprenticeships, and provision for students with high needs. The College also provides higher education and full cost provision. There are clear progression routes to level 3 (and in some cases level 6) in most curriculum areas. St Helens and Knowsley face ongoing challenges linked to growth, educational attainment, and social inclusion. Economic growth and fair access to services and opportunities are vital to the region's future prosperity.

## **Mission, Vision, Strategy and Objectives**

With a mission to “Transform lives through excellence in education and training”, the College’s three-year Strategic Plan sets out its ambition to be one of the best technical and vocational colleges in the country and positions the College as a major contributor to the employment and skills ecosystem of the Liverpool City Region.

Six strategic goals provide a framework for more detailed operational activities, transforming the way the College works with students, staff, employers, and local communities:

- Outstanding Student Experience
- Exceptional Curriculum
- Growth
- Transformed Estate
- Employer of Choice
- Anchor Institution

## **Public Value Statement**

The College seeks to add value to the social, economic and physical well-being of the wider communities that we serve, by:

1. providing education and training in accordance with the College’s mission, statement of aims and values meeting the needs of students, employers and the wider communities in general

2. raising aspirations of students and the communities by promoting prospects and celebrating success
3. ensuring a broad curriculum offer with good progression routes from entry level to higher education and training
4. promoting healthy lifestyles and good citizenship skills to all students and colleagues
5. being responsive to the changing needs and circumstances
6. actively listening to and engaging with the stakeholders of the College, aiming to provide the best possible service within the mission of the College
7. being a respectful and responsible employer
8. always acting with corporate integrity.

The Public Sector Equality Duty states that the College must, in carrying out its functions, have due regard to:

- (a) Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 requires the College to publish:

- Equality objectives, at least every four years
- Information to demonstrate its compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty

This annual report is approved by the Board of Governors for publication on the College websites, and outlines what the College is doing to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The report summarises staff, governor and student profiles across a range of protected characteristics and compares the performance of different groups of students.

The report also highlights some of the activities the College has undertaken during the 2023/24 academic year, to promote equality, diversity and inclusivity, including activities within the curriculum to develop students' awareness and understanding of equality diversity and inclusion.

## **Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

We are committed to creating an environment where students, staff and governors actively promote equity, diversity and inclusivity, tackle bullying and discrimination and work to narrow any gaps in achievement between different groups.

In 2023/24, we partnered with the National Centre for Diversity to embed our values and behaviours framework. Initially adopting the FREDIE values, to reflect our solutions-focused approach and innovative culture. While we have made significant strides for our students, apprentices, and staff, we acknowledge there is still progress to be made. Our staff are acutely aware of the barriers faced by our students and apprentices, particularly in the context of rising living costs. These factors have amplified challenges but also underscored the importance of inclusive education in driving social mobility. We are committed to strategies that support all students to achieve their full potential.

We are proud to be recognised as an Investor in Diversity by the National Centre for Diversity, and a key anchor institution, actively working towards the goal of the College being inclusive, equitable, and welcoming to all. We will continue to champion these values as we move forward together.

The College aims to ensure that all students and apprentices have an excellent experience that equips them for the next stage of their education, training and/or employment. Our ambition is that everyone at the College recognises and discharges their duty to ensure equality and inclusivity are promoted and diversity is celebrated.

The College seeks to create an inclusive environment by:

- developing a culture of respect;
- providing students, staff and governors with relevant training and support to discharge their individual duties to promote equality and diversity;
- providing staff and students with the support they need to realise their full potential;
- achieving the goals set out in our Equality Objectives.

The College seeks to provide a safe, supportive environment for all its staff and students, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The College welcomes individuals and groups from local, regional and international communities. The College values difference and diversity and will strive to create positive working relationships so that everyone can work and study to the best of their abilities, free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

## Promoting Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The College seeks to deliver an inclusive curriculum through which students' understanding and appreciation of equality and diversity is developed.

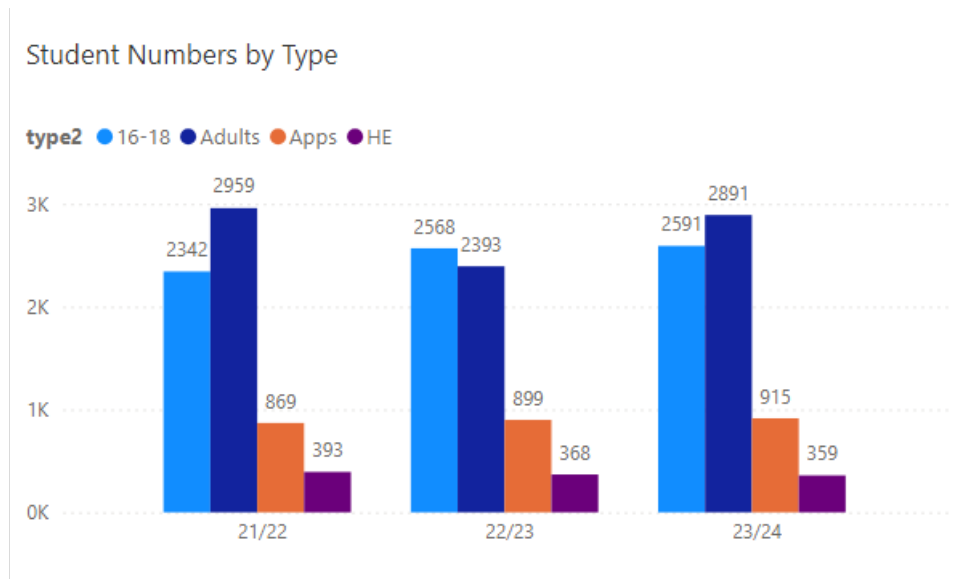
During the 2023/24 academic year, the College has worked to enhance its strategic approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, through the following actions:

- Providing equality, diversity and inclusion update training for all members of the wider leadership team, focused identification of a senior lead for equality, diversity and inclusion and development of an equality, diversity and inclusion plan.
- Achievement of the Investors in Diversity 'Bronze' and 'Silver' accreditations.
- Providing equality, diversity and inclusion training for college staff.
- Widening of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group membership.
- Establishing an Equality and Diversity Reference Group, with membership drawn from across the College to support our Investors in Diversity journey.
- Embedding our Curriculum Equality and Diversity Statement that underpins the core principles of:
  - Removing barriers, to enable all students, regardless of circumstances, to have access to an education that will help prepare them for their next steps in life.
  - Inclusion of equality and diversity topics within the curriculum to educate our students about those with different experiences or circumstances and the broader community locally and globally.
- Increasing the focus on equality, diversity and inclusion issues through key quality assurance and improvement processes, e.g. learning walks, lesson observations and student voice activities.
- Improving college systems to support more detailed evaluation of the performance of different groups of students.
- Embedding the concept of FREDIE (fairness, respect, equality/equity, diversity, inclusion and engagement). Ensuring that the College's tutorial programme embraces key themes such as bullying and harassment, religion/belief and discrimination and promotes important annual events such as World Suicide Day, Black History Month, and World Mental Health Day.

## Student Population

As illustrated in Figure 1 below, there were 6,756 students enrolled in the academic year 2023/24. Of these, 2,591 (38%) were aged 16-18, 2,891(43%) were aged 19+, 915 (14%) were apprentices and 359 (5%) were students studying higher education programmes. This represents a net growth in student numbers of 528 from 2022/23, with the most significant change being in adult student numbers.

Figure 1



The gender mix for the College in 2023/24 was 54% (3600) male and 46% (3081) female, as shown in Figure 2. This represents a slight increase in the proportion of male learners, compared to the split in 2022/23. The proportion of male students has increased, as demonstrated in Figure 3, due to an increase in both 16-18 and 19+ students, whilst the increase in females is due to aged 19+ students.

Figure 2

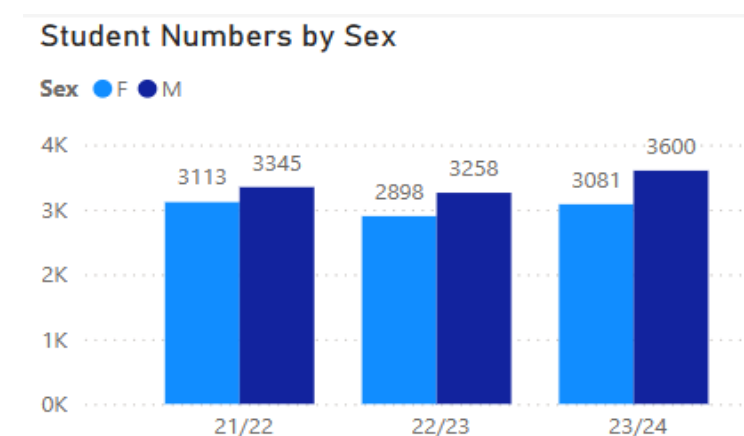
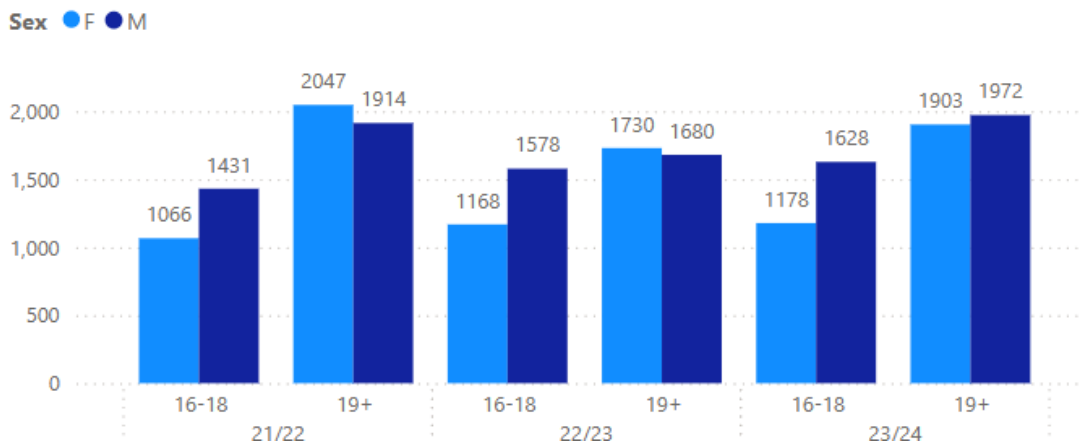




Figure 3

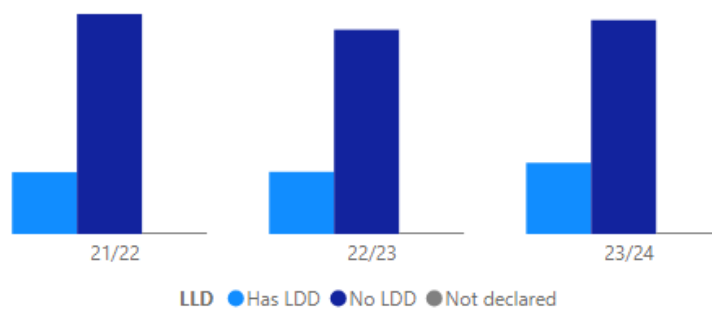
Student Numbers by Sex and Age Group



21.% of the College’s students declared a learning difficulty/disability in 2021/22, as illustrated in Figure 4. This compares to 23.31% in 2022/23 and 24.96% in 2023/24. The proportion of students for whom this is not known has decreased to 0.06% in 2023/24 and the proportion of students who are declaring is increasing, which is positive as it allows students to access support in line with their needs.

Figure 4 - Students by Learning Difficulty or Disability 2021-2024

Students by Learning Difficulty Or Disability



21/22 - Has LDD = 21.9%, No LDD = 77.8%, Not declared = 0.3%  
 22/23 - Has LDD = 23.3%, No LDD = 76.6%, Not declared = 0.1%  
 23/24 - Has LDD = 25.0%, No LDD = 75.0%, Not declared = 0.1%

Table 1 below shows the breakdown of students’ primary declared learning difficulty or disability. Although the proportion of students has remained the same at 17.9%, 50 more students declared a primary learning difficulty or disability of autism spectrum disorder in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23. The number of students declaring dyslexia as their primary learning difficulty or disability remains consistently high across all three years and increase of 43 students compared with 2022/23.

Table 1

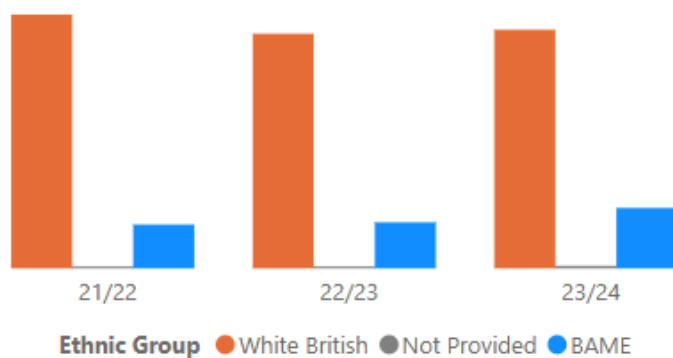
Students Primary declared Learning Difficulty or Disability

AcademicYearID Description	21/22		22/23		23/24	
	Students	%	Students	%	Students	%
Asperger's syndrome	32	2.12%	36	2.36%	32	1.83%
Autism spectrum disorder	230	15.25%	273	17.90%	313	17.90%
Disability affecting mobility	65	4.31%	79	5.18%	64	3.66%
Dyscalculia		0.46%	21	1.38%	20	1.14%
Dyslexia	345	22.88%	336	22.03%	379	21.67%
Hearing impairment	48	3.18%	35	2.30%	54	3.09%
Mental health difficulty	277	18.37%	235	15.41%	313	17.90%
Moderate learning difficulty	93	6.17%	84	5.51%	76	4.35%
Not provided	10	0.66%	19	1.25%	29	1.66%
Other disability	71	4.71%	52	3.41%	64	3.66%
Other learning difficulty	33	2.19%	44	2.89%	52	2.97%
Other medical condition (for example epilepsy, asthma, diabetes)	107	7.10%	105	6.89%	127	7.26%
Other physical disability	27	1.79%	31	2.03%	44	2.52%
Other specific learning difficulty (e.g. Dyspraxia)	12	0.80%	26	1.70%	40	2.29%
Prefer not to say	15	0.99%	17	1.11%	13	0.74%
Profound complex disabilities		0.07%		0.26%		0.29%
Severe learning difficulty	40	2.65%	22	1.44%	12	0.69%
Social and emotional difficulties	43	2.85%	48	3.15%	52	2.97%
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	12	0.80%	15	0.98%	15	0.86%
Temporary disability after illness (for example post-viral) or accident		0.33%		0.33%		0.17%
Vision impairment	35	2.32%	38	2.49%	42	2.40%

The proportion of students who identify their ethnicity as BAME has increased over the last 3 years by 5.4% between 2021/22 (Figure 5) and 2023/24, indicating that the College is recruiting a more diverse student population. The College population is slightly more diverse than that of the Liverpool City Region, where 83.2% identify as white British and 16.3% as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (which includes white other) (BAME).

Figure 5 - Ethnicity of Students

White British/BAME



21/22 - White British = 84.9%, BAME = 14.7%, Not provided = 0.4%  
 22/23 - White British = 83.2%, BAME = 16.3%, Not provided = 0.5%  
 23/24 - White British = 79.1%, BAME = 20.1%, Not provided = 0.8%

Table 2 below shows the full breakdown of ethnicity for the College’s student population and the changes in specific ethnicity demographic in other white as well as other ethnicities demonstrating the changing demographics of the student population that the College is now serving.

Table 2

Students by Ethnicity

AcademicYearID Ethnic group	21/22		22/23		23/24	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
31 - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	5980	84.9%	5529	83.2%	5622	79.1%
32 - Irish	21	0.3%	18	0.3%	20	0.3%
33 - Gypsy or Irish Traveller		0.1%		0.1%		0.1%
34 - Any Other White background	278	3.9%	295	4.4%	446	6.3%
35 - White and Black Caribbean	23	0.3%	25	0.4%	40	0.6%
36 - White and Black African	43	0.6%	41	0.6%	43	0.6%
37 - White and Asian	54	0.8%	58	0.9%	70	1.0%
38 - Any Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	71	1.0%	77	1.2%	98	1.4%
39 - Indian	18	0.3%	12	0.2%	30	0.4%
40 - Pakistani	40	0.6%	14	0.2%	21	0.3%
41 - Bangladeshi		0.1%		0.1%		0.1%
42 - Chinese	26	0.4%	24	0.4%	24	0.3%
43 - Any other Asian background	57	0.8%	87	1.3%	90	1.3%
44 - African	147	2.1%	147	2.2%	187	2.6%
45 - Caribbean	15	0.2%		0.1%		0.1%
46 - Any other Black / African / Caribbean background	26	0.4%	24	0.4%	35	0.5%
47 - Arab	58	0.8%	77	1.2%	83	1.2%
98 - Any other ethnic group	144	2.0%	167	2.5%	219	3.1%
99 - Not provided	28	0.4%	32	0.5%	60	0.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7042</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6646</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7107</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Student Outcomes – Classroom-Based FE Provision

The College aims to ensure that there is no significant difference in achievement rates for students distinguished by the following characteristics:

- Gender
- Age group
- With or without a learning difficulty/disability
- Ethnic group
- EHCP
- High needs
- Eligibility for free school meals
- Eligibility for bursary payments
- Care experienced young people

### Gender

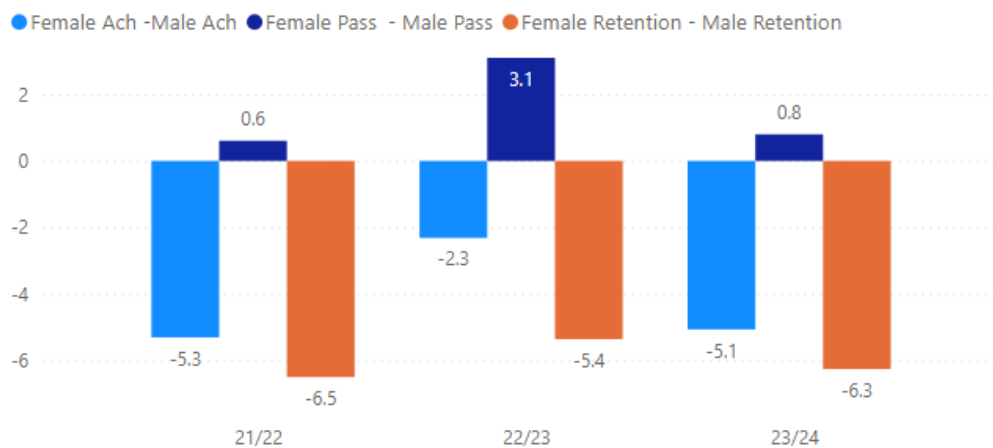
As illustrated in Figure 8 below, whilst males have historically achieved at a higher rate than females, the gap has increased in 2023/24 with female achievement at 77.24% lower than male achievement at 82.34% and a gap of 6.1%. This is

predominantly due to lower retention rates for female students in female dominated areas of the curriculum.

Male students typically progress to positive destinations at a higher rate than female students and the gap has widened slightly over that two-year period, mainly due to mix and balance of provision.

Figure 8

Female Vs Male

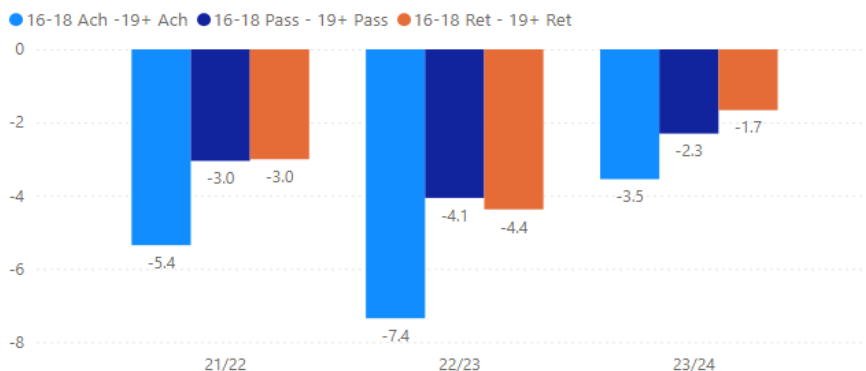


Age Group

As illustrated in Figure 9 below, retention, pass and achievement rates for students aged 16-18 improved over the last year and retention and achievement rates were above those for students aged 19+ in 2022/23. For students aged 19+, pass rates have remained relatively static over three years, but declining retention has led to lower-than-expected achievement rates for adult students in 2023/24, but this is an improvement on 2022/23 achievement.

Figure 9

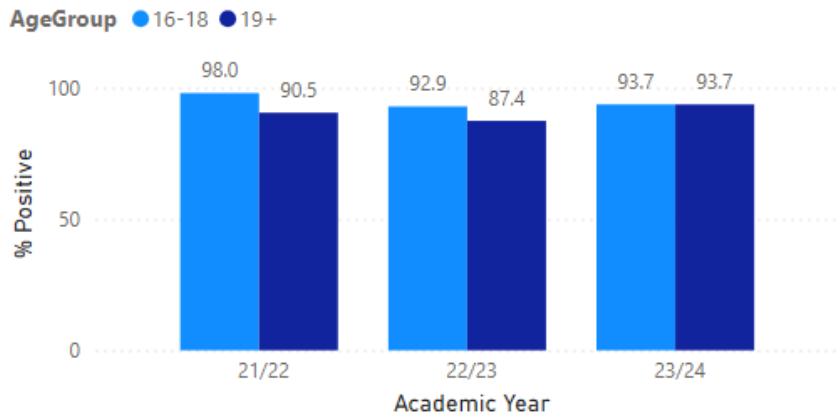
16-18 Vs 19+



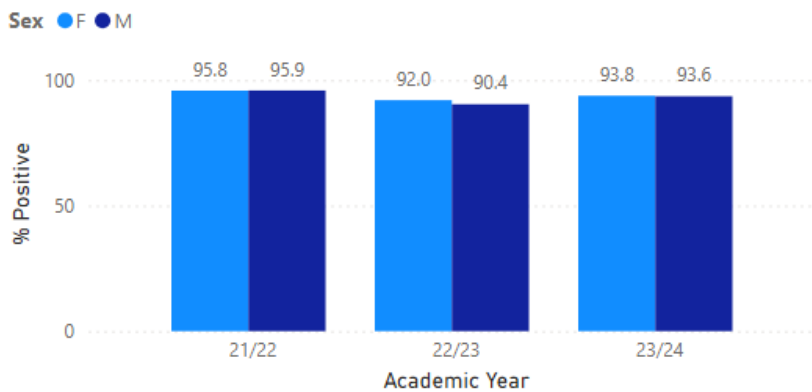
The gap in the proportion of students progressing to a positive destination has narrowed between age groups to less than 1%. There is no variation on positive destinations between female and male students in 2023/24.

Figure 10

% Positive Destination by Age Group



% Positive Destination by Sex



### Learning Difficulty/Disability

Figure 11 below shows that in 2023/24 students without a learning difficulty/disability achieved, passed and were retained at a marginally higher rate than those with a learning difficulty/disability, whereas in 2022/23 the converse was true.

Figure 11

LDD Vs No LDD

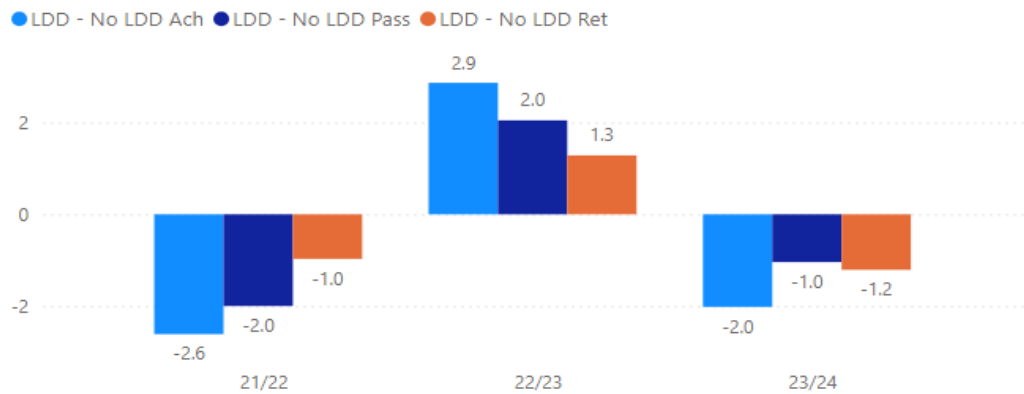
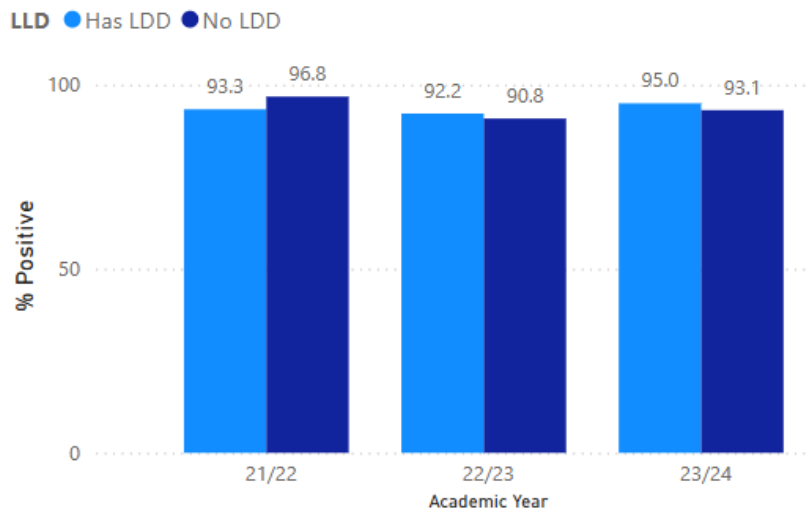


Figure 12 below shows that progression to a positive destination was higher for students with a learning difficulty/disability than for those without a learning difficulty/disability in 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Figure 12

% Positive Destination by LDD

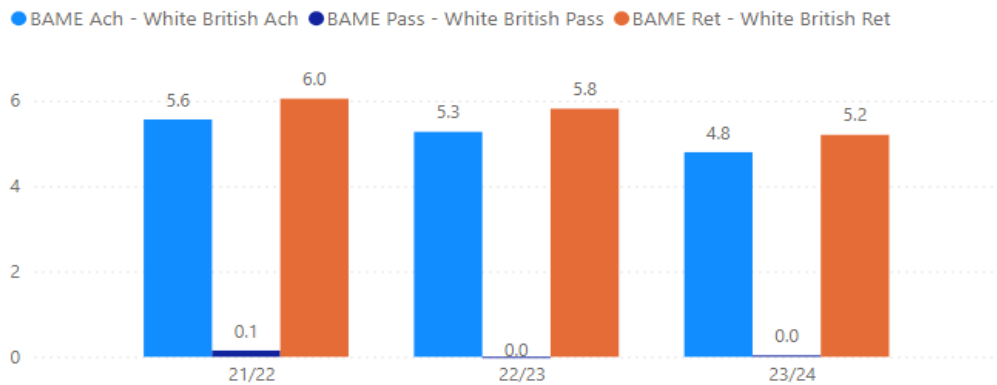


**Ethnic Group**

In the three years from 2021/22 to 2023/24, retention and achievement rates for BAME students were consistently higher compared to those from white ethnic backgrounds and the gap has reduced in 2023/24. Pass rates were similar for both BAME and white students, as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13

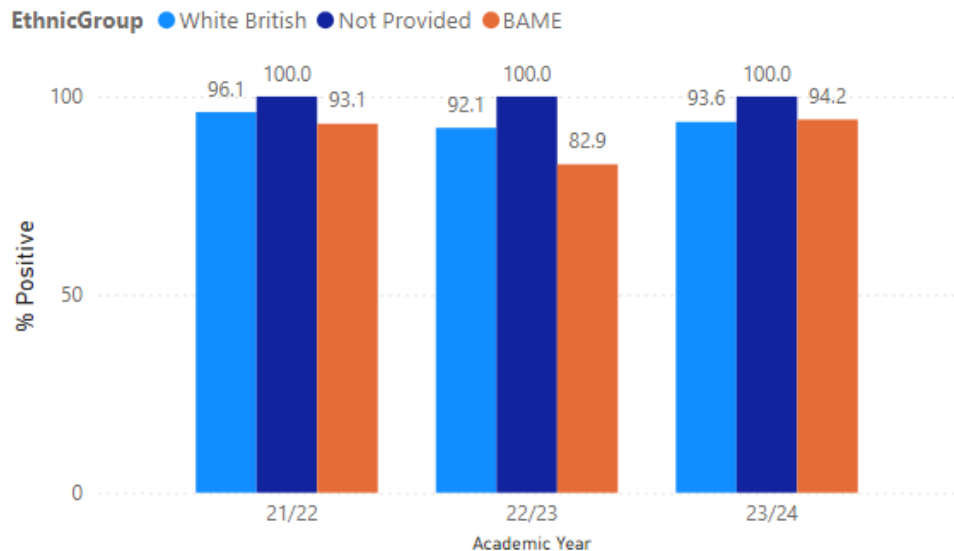
BAME Vs White British



Students from white ethnic groups secured positive destinations at a higher rate than those from BAME groups in 2021/22 and 2022/23. However, the gap has reduced in 2023/24 indicating an upward trend for students from BAME groups where the gap has now been eliminated as indicated in Figure 14.

Figure 14

% Positive Destination by Ethnicity



Education Health and Care Plan

In 2022/23, students with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) achieved at a higher rate than students without an EHCP, as illustrated in figure 15 below. In 2023/24, the gap in achievement, retention, and pass rates has reduced between students with an EHCP to those without an EHCP.

In 2023/24, the proportion of students with an EHCP who progressed to a positive destination was 1.3% points higher than for those without an EHCP. Over the three years to 2023/24, a small proportion more of students with an EHCP have been progressed to a positive destination, than of students without an EHCP as demonstrated in figure 16 below.

Figure 15

EHCP Vs No EHCP

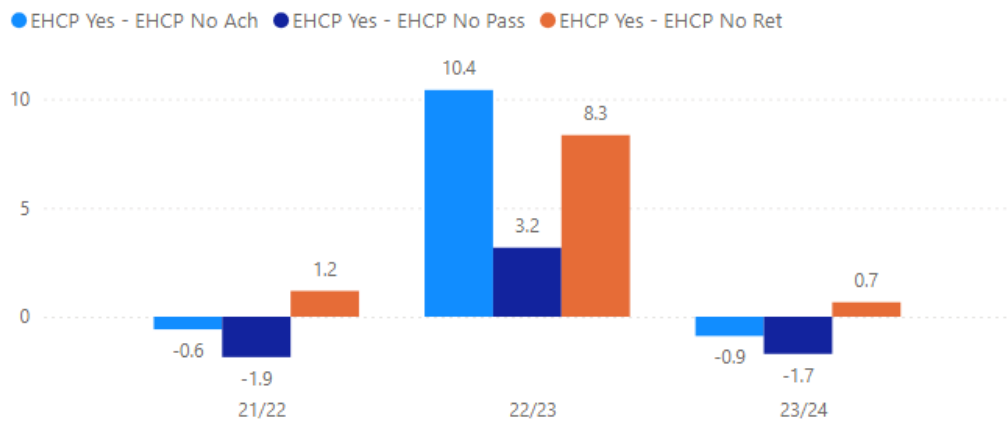
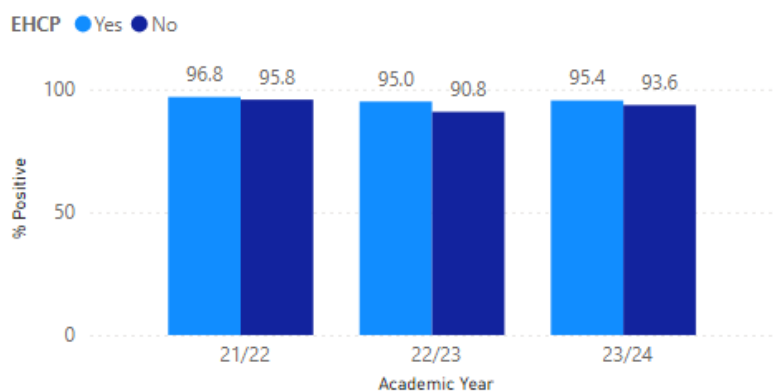


Figure 16

% Positive Destination by EHCP



### High Needs

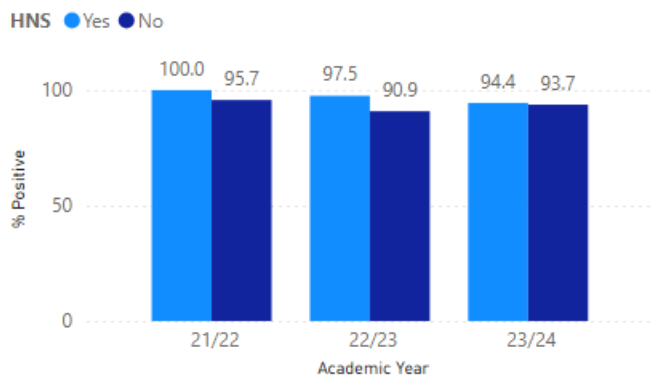
Retention and achievement rates for students with high needs have been consistently higher than for students without high needs since 2021/22. In 2023/24 slightly less students with high needs passed their qualification than those who do not have high needs, but their achievement rates are higher than the college achievement rates.

Progression to a positive destination has been higher for students who do not have high needs than for those who do, except in 23/24, where the gap has been reduced.



Figure 17

% Positive Destination by High Needs St...

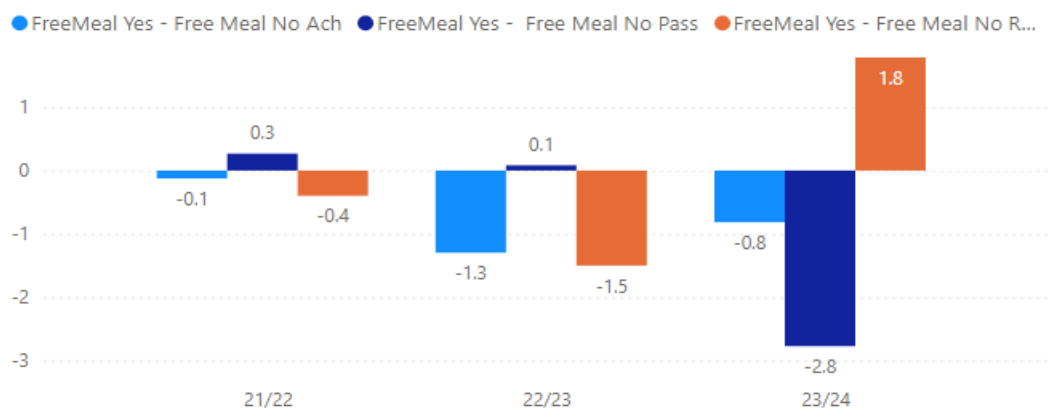


### Free School Meals

Students who are not eligible for free school meals typically achieve at a similar rate to their peers, who are eligible for free school meals, as shown in Figure 18 below. Although there is a slight decline in pass rates, retention rates for eligible students have increased in the 2023/24 period.

Figure 18

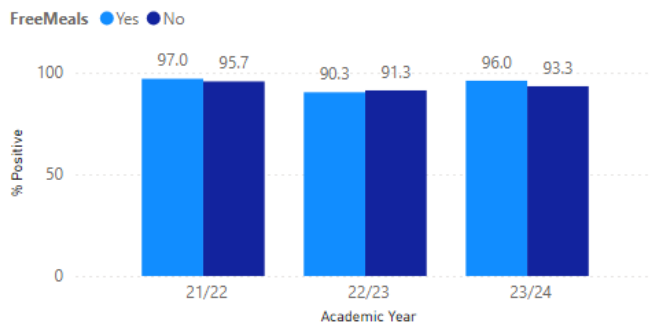
Free Meals Vs Not Free Meals



In each of the last two years, the proportion of students progressing to a positive destination has been similar amongst students, who are eligible for free meals except in 2023/24, where it has increased for those who are receipt of free meals as shown in Figure 19.

Figure 19

% Positive Destination by Free Meals



### Bursary Eligibility

Students who are eligible for bursary consistently achieve and are retained at a higher rate than those who are not eligible. Students who are eligible for bursary payments progress to positive destinations at a consistently higher rate than those who are not eligible as indicated below in Figure 20.

Figure 20

Bursary Vs Not Bursary

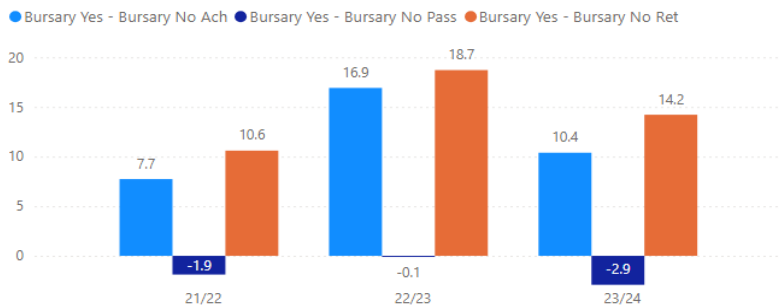
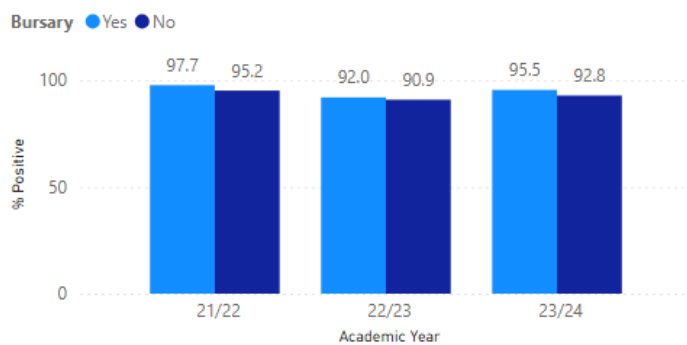


Figure 21

% Positive Destination by Bursary Eligibility



## Care Experienced Young People (CEYP)

Retention and achievement rates have declined for students who CEYP between 2022/23 and 2023/24, whereas pass rates have improved slightly, mainly due to retention as some students have been relocated out of the area. Students who are CEYP, progress to positive destinations at a lower rate than students who are not CEYP, as indicated in Figure 22 below.

Figure 22

CEYP Vs Not CEYP

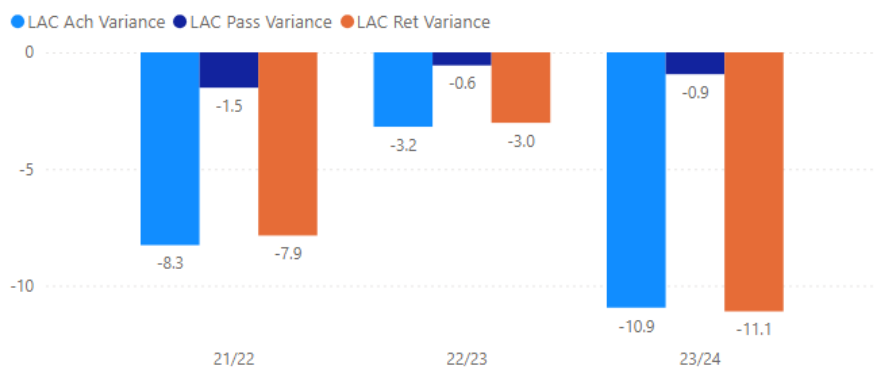
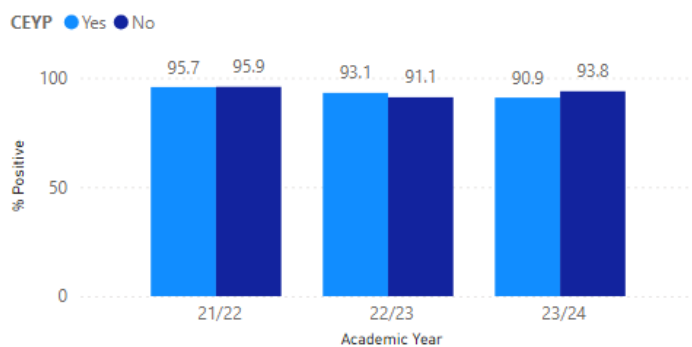


Figure 23

% Positive Destination by CEYP Status



## Student Participation and Outcomes - Higher Education

The College monitors Higher Education (HE) participation and achievement rates, to identify gaps between the following groups;

- Age group
- Gender\*
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Deprivation

This ensures that targeted support and initiatives can be put in place to achieve parity between groups.

\*Whilst gender preferences are collected, due to the low numbers there is limited statistical or qualitative analysis available. The analysis below includes male and female categories only. Data is not currently collected to analyse the impact of sexual orientation on outcomes.

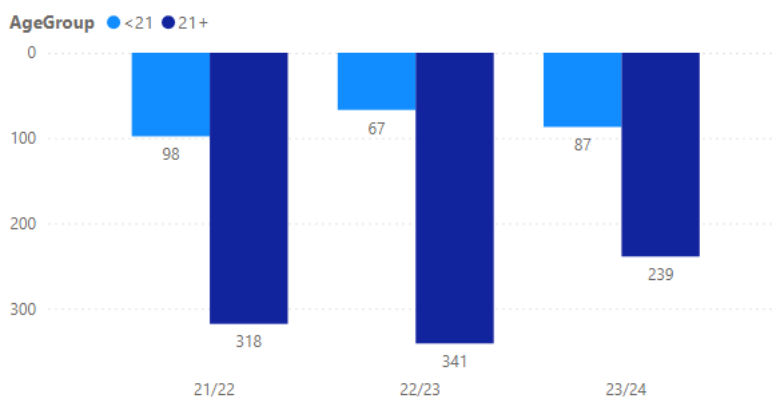
## Age Group

The number of mature students studying HE courses at the College is consistently higher the number of young students, though the gap did decrease in 23/24.

In an exception to the data from the previous two years, young students in 2021/22 did not have a significantly higher achievement rate than mature students with no significant gaps in achievement (Figure 24).

Figure 24

Participation by Age Group



## Gender

The gap between male and female achievement increased in 2023/24 and whilst the participation numbers reduced in line with a general decline in HE numbers, the gap has also significantly reduced. The achievement rate for both groups has increased, though the gap has also increased to 5.99% with male students continuing to outperform females as demonstrated in Figures 25 and 26 below.

Figure 25

Participation by Sex

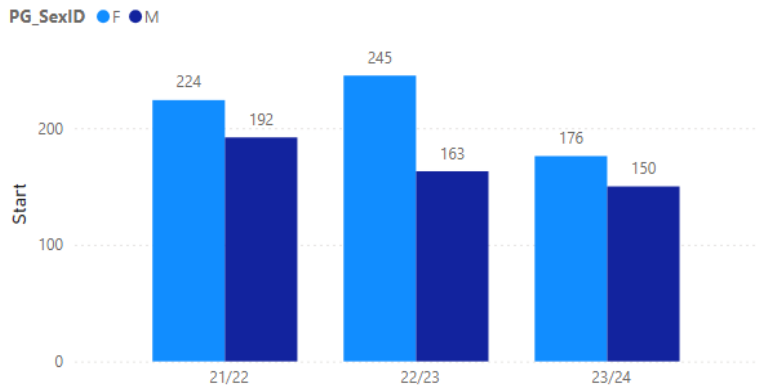
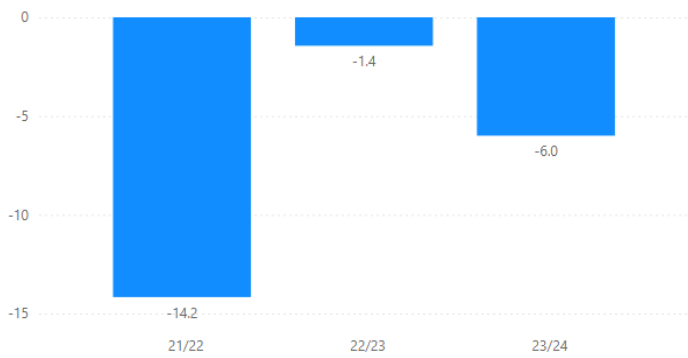


Figure 26

HE Achievement by Sex



Starts and Leavers

PG_SexID Hybrid End Year	F			M		
	Start	Leavers	Continuing	Start	Leavers	Continuing
21/22	224	217		192	189	
22/23	245	211		163	150	
23/24	176	157		150	142	

Sex Ach F, Sex Ach M, Sex Ach Variance

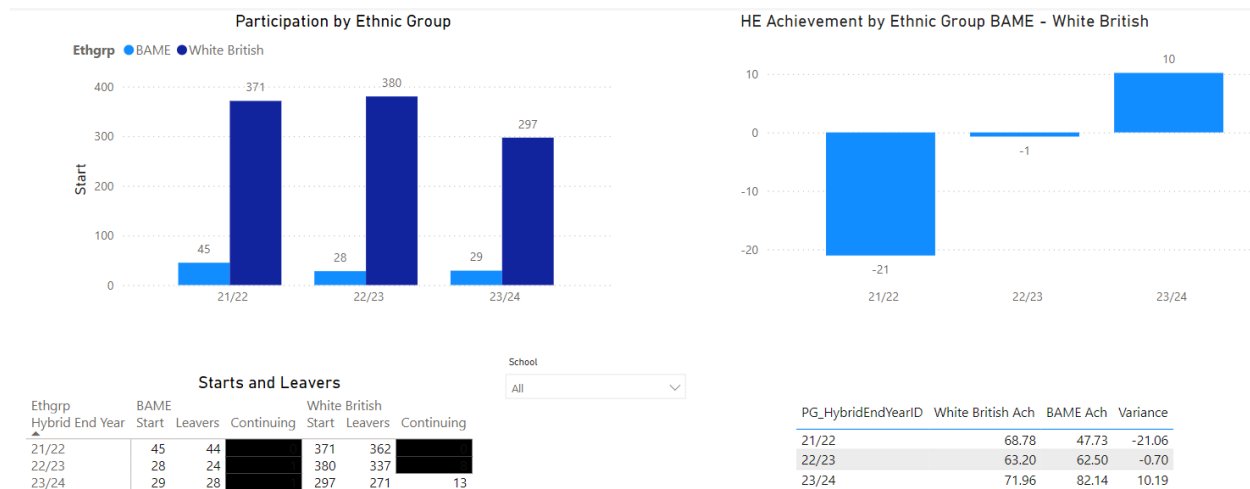
BY PG\_HYBRIDENDYEARID

PG_HybridEndYearID	Sex Ach F	Sex Ach M	Sex Ach Variance
21/22	59.91	74.07	-14.17
22/23	62.56	64.00	-1.44
23/24	70.06	76.06	-5.99

## Ethnicity

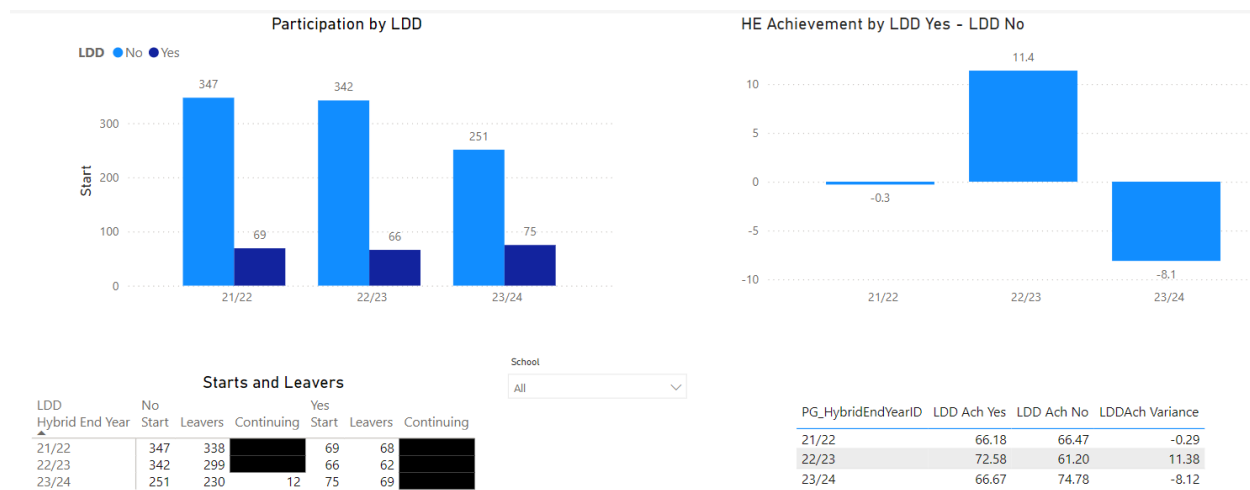
The percentage of students in 2023/24, who are from non-white ethnic groups has increased since 2022/23. Those from a BAME background have achieved at a

higher rate than White British for the first time. However, as the numbers are still low, comparisons are statistically insignificant.



## Learning Disability/Difficulty

The proportion of HE students with a declared learning difficulty/disability conditions has continued to increase, with over 10% rise over the 3 years. The achievement rate has remained steady, despite an increase in 22/23, although the gap between this group and those without a declared learning difficulty/disability has become wider.



## Index of Multiple Deprivation

Whilst the number of students who fall into each IMD category has fluctuated in line with total enrolments, the proportion in each category and profile has remained consistent over the last three academic years. A significant proportion of our students come from low-income households and/or live in areas of deprivation and historic low participation.

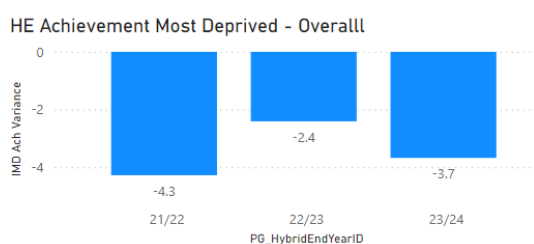
2023/24	
IMD Decile 2019	Proportion of Population
1 (Most deprived)	29.3%
2	17.5%
3	9.3%
4	9.6%
5	8.7%
6	4.3%
7	5.3%
8	7.5%
9	7.2%
10 (Least deprived)	0.9%

IMD Decile	21/22	22/23	23/24
1	34.25%	31.36%	29.38%
2	15.25%	17.74%	17.50%
3	9.25%	9.00%	9.38%
4	9.50%	7.71%	9.69%
5	7.00%	7.20%	8.75%
6	6.00%	5.66%	4.38%
7	3.50%	3.86%	5.31%
8	6.75%	8.23%	7.50%
9	5.75%	6.43%	7.19%
10	2.75%	2.83%	0.94%

### Achievement Related to Index of Multiple Deprivation

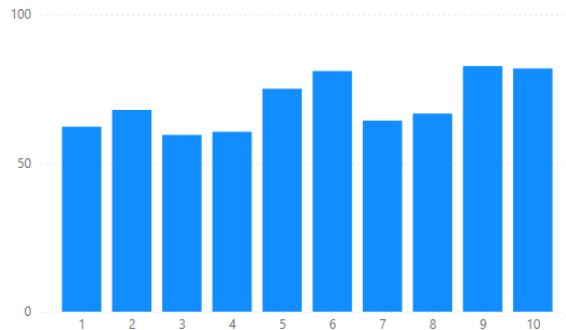
Achievement rates for those in the lowest deprivation category has remained below the average achievement, with a difference of 3.68%. This has become the primary focus of the newly approved Access and Participation Plan for 2025/26 onwards.

Hybrid End Year	Overall Achievement Rate	IMD 2019 Decile 1 (Most Deprived)	Difference
21/22	66.50%	62.22%	-4.28%
22/23	63.16%	60.75%	-2.41%
23/24	72.91%	69.23%	-3.68%

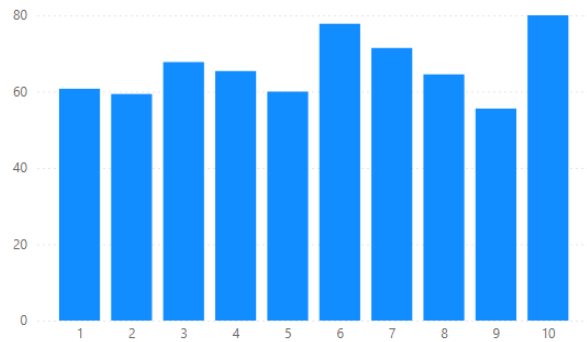


Whilst the achievement rate profile is spiky, due to a variance of student numbers in each category, there is a clear trend that shows that achievement rates are generally higher (see graphs below) for students from less deprived categories.

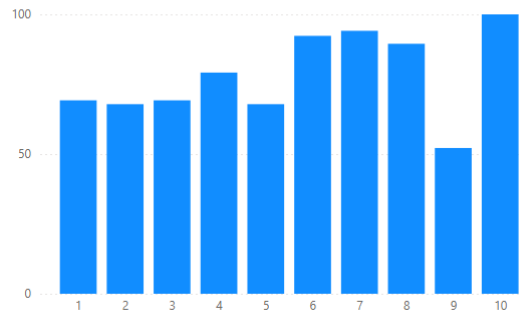
Achievement Rate by deprivation category 21/22



Achievement Rate by deprivation category 22/23



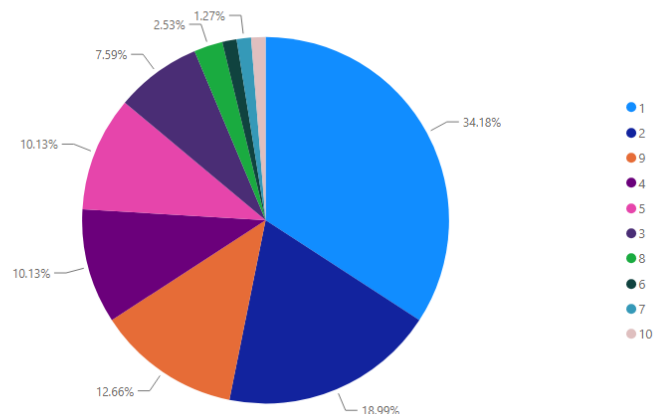
Achievement Rate by deprivation category 23/24



## Withdrawals

Retention has increased overall, and the breakdown of withdrawn students shows that those from areas of highest deprivation are 29.4% of the population, but 34.2% of withdrawals. The lowest three deprivation categories form 56.3% of the population, but account for 65.8% of withdrawals. This has changed over time and is a high priority within the new Access and Participation Plan.

Withdrawals by deprivation category 23/24





## Intersectional Outcomes

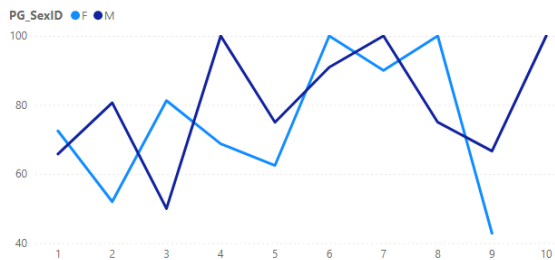
Whilst it could be expected that students who fall into multiple categories experience increased barriers to achievement, the relationship is not linear, and some co-groupings experience more disadvantage than others.

Whilst there is a correlation between levels of deprivation and achievement, deprivation has the biggest impact on young students and those with a disability.

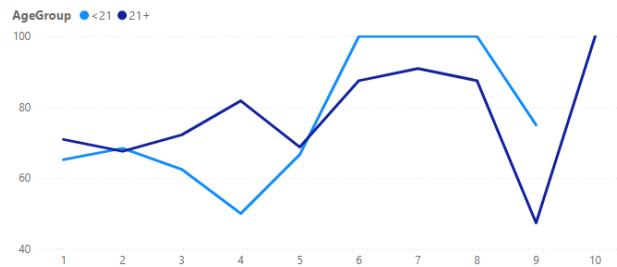
Male students are most affected if they also have a declared learning difficulty/disability.

Age (over 21) has the most significant impact on males and non-white students.

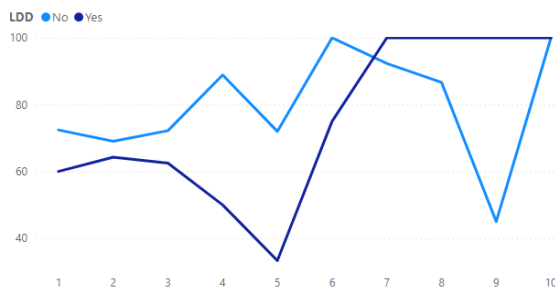
Deprivation Category and Sex



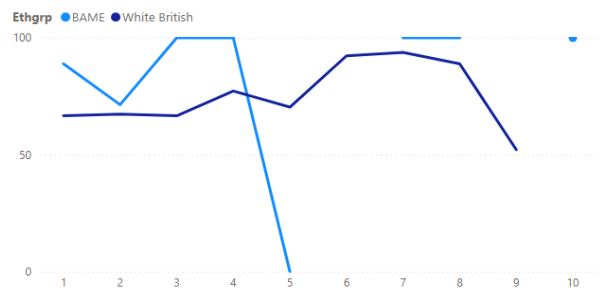
Deprivation Category and Age Group



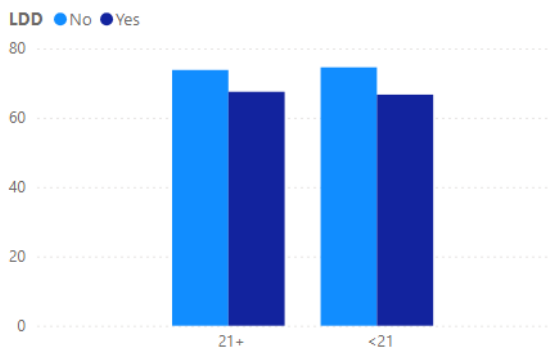
Deprivation Category and LDD



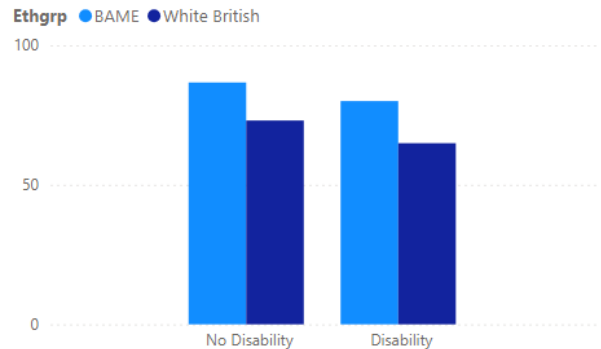
Deprivation Category and Ethnicity

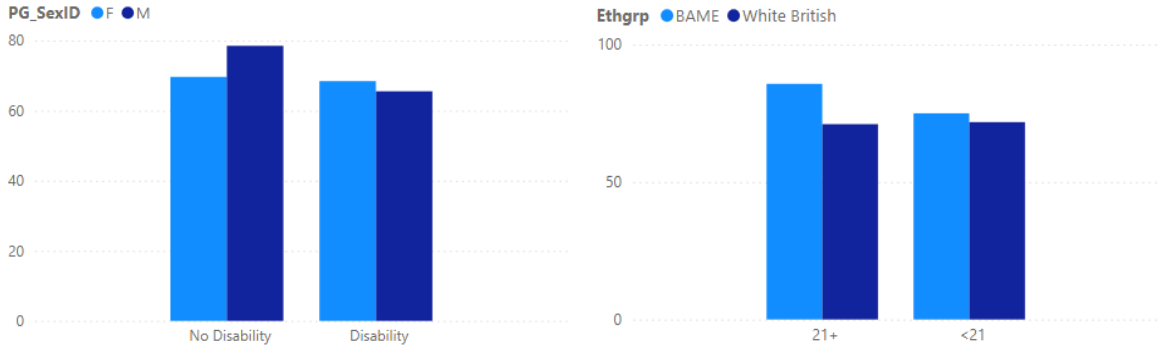


Disability and Age



Disability and Ethnicity





## Participation and Achievement – Apprenticeships

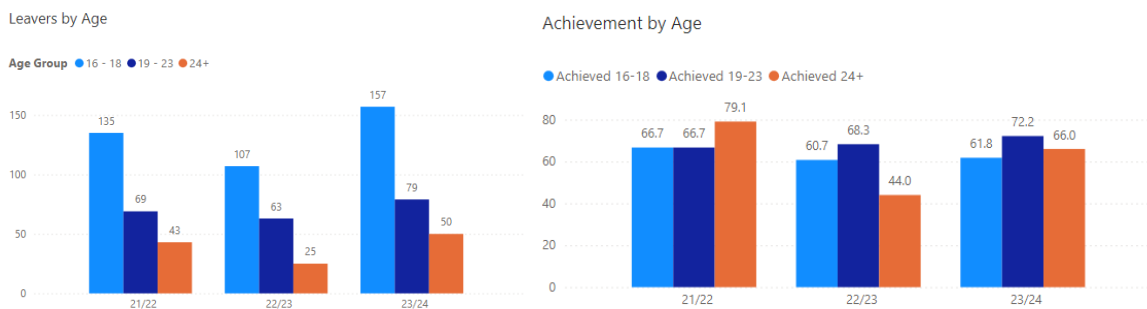
The College monitors participation and achievement rates to ensure there are no significant gaps between the following groups:

- Age group
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability

### Age Group

The significant majority of the College’s apprentices in 2023/24 were aged 16-18, followed by those aged 19-23 and then those aged 24+. This represents a significant change over time, primarily due to a move away from subcontracting a significant volume 24+ apprenticeships pre-covid. This is bucking the regional trend where other providers do not have the same 16-18 volumes and St Helens is the largest college provider for this category with growth across all age groups.

Achievement rates are above national rates for each age group as indicated below.

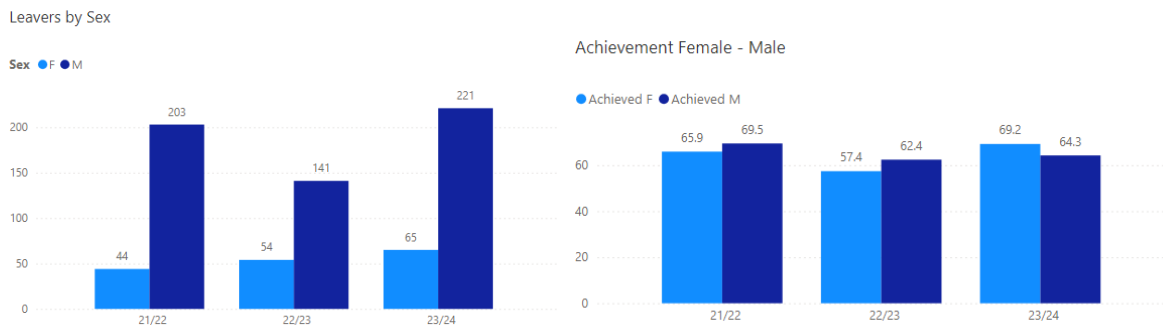


### Gender

In each of the last three years, male apprentices have significantly outnumbered female apprentices. This is primarily due to most apprentices studying at the College

being employed in the construction and engineering sectors. The College is working hard to increase the number of female apprentices in these sectors.

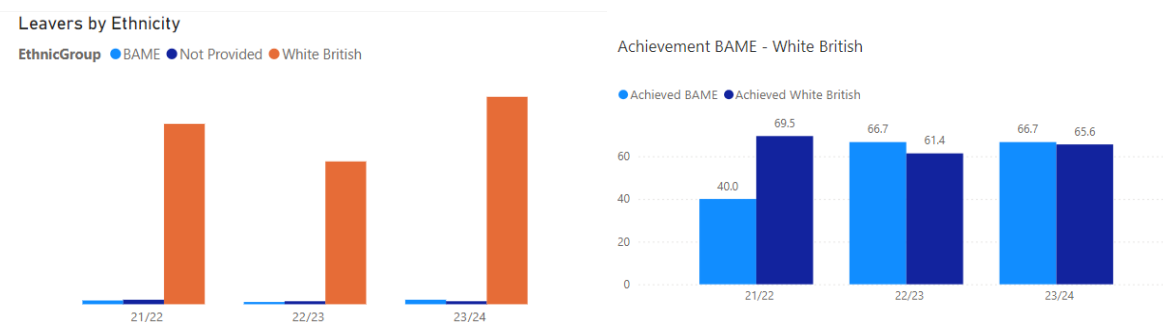
Female apprentices performed better than male apprentices in 2023/24, achieving at a significantly higher rate, which is an improvement on 2022/23 outcomes and reversing the trend of previous years.



## Ethnicity

As with classroom-based further education and higher education provision, participation of students who are from BAME backgrounds is low, broadly representing the local population. The number of apprentices who are not from a white background has declined significantly since pre-covid. In 2020/21, there were just five apprentices from a non-white background, making up just 1.4% of all apprentices in 2020/21. This has not significantly changed in 2023/24 with 6 identified as BAME and 4 unwilling to stipulate.

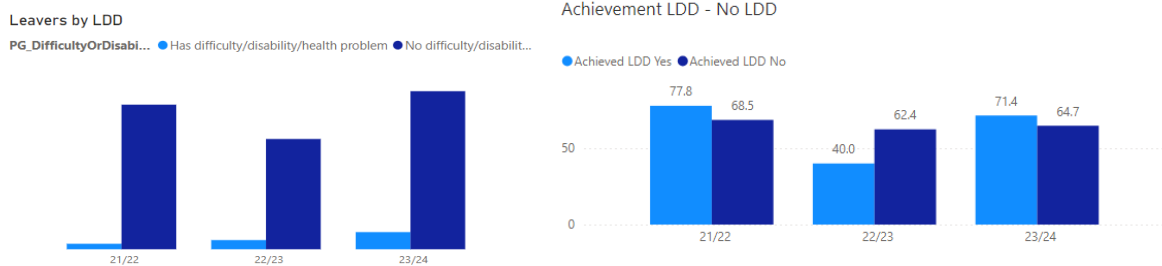
Due to the low proportion of apprentices who are not from a white background, comparisons are statistically insignificant.



## Disability

In 2023/24, 28 apprentices declared a learning difficulty/disability. Proportionally, this represents an increase compared to the previous three years of which 71.4% achieved their standard. This increase could be due to greater attention and focus on declaration of needs or training impact to detect needs later receiving declaration.

Evidence suggests that apprentices often don't declare disabilities with employers initially. Work is being carried out on accessible apprenticeships within the Liverpool City Region (LCR).

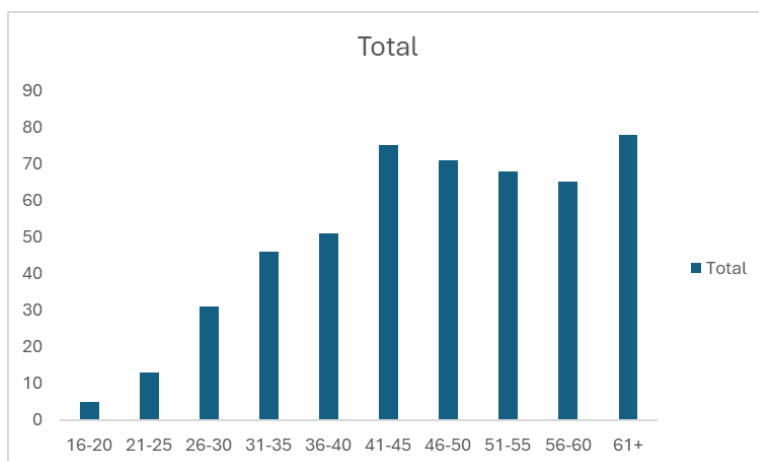


## Staff Profile

The College monitors its staff profile by the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability

The College employed 503 staff at the end of the academic year 2023/24. The highest proportion of staff are in the 60+ age group.



Since 2021, the proportion of staff aged 61+ has grown significantly, probably attributable to delayed retirements and the decline in the "56-60" group might indicate transitions to the "61+" category due to ageing or early retirement of that age group.

The representation of younger staff (under 25) remains low. Strategies for addressing the age profile of the College could be developing campaigns to attract younger workers, highlighting career progression opportunities and appealing to early career professionals and considering apprenticeships and graduate

programmes. For mid-to-late career staff (46-60), the College provides flexible working options and will look at phased retirement plans and career development opportunities tailored to experienced workers. Leveraging stability in the 31-45 age groups will be achieved by identifying high-potential staff through succession planning for leadership roles and offering development programmes.

## Gender and Seniority

Level of Seniority	Areas by Age Range										Total
	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61+	
SLT				1	1	2	3	1	3	1	12
Heads of School/Department				1	1	2	5	5	3	1	18
Deputy Heads of School				1	3	2	4	1	0	2	13
Support Manager			1		2	2	2	4	2	2	15
Support	4	10	13	22	16	15	27	18	17	11	153
Teaching		3	17	19	29	40	35.5	33	38	44	258.5
Teaching Support		1	1	2	3	13	4.5	10	11	23	68.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>538</b>

## Implications

### 1. Ageing Workforce:

- a. The workforce is skewed towards older age groups, particularly in leadership and teaching positions. This may lead to challenges in succession planning as these groups retire.
- b. The College will look to develop a pipeline for younger talent through apprenticeships, graduate programmes, or early career pathways to address potential future gaps.

### 2. Retention of Older Staff:

- a. The presence of older staff, particularly in teaching and teaching support roles, could be an asset if their expertise is leveraged through mentorship programmes.
- b. However, it also raises questions about the organisation's ability to refresh its workforce and adapt to change.

### 3. Diversity of Leadership:

- a. Leadership positions are predominantly held by individuals aged 41+, with no representation of younger talent in these roles. This could stifle innovation and limit diverse perspectives.
- b. The College plans to introduce a Future Leaders programme targeted at younger staff to diversify the leadership pipeline.

#### 4. Recruitment Strategy:

- a. Limited representation of staff under 30 (50 total) suggests the need to improve outreach to younger demographics.
- b. The College will look to diversify their current recruitment channels to attract early career professionals.

#### 5. Support Roles as Entry Points:

- a. The concentration of younger staff in support roles suggests these may be entry-level positions. To retain these individuals, the College will ensure clear progression pathways into more senior roles.

#### 6. Teaching Role Challenges:

- a. With the teaching workforce heavily weighted towards the 36-61+ range, proactive measures are needed to recruit and retain younger teachers to ensure continuity.

### Gender and Gender Pay Reporting

The proportion of females and males has changed only very slightly over the last two years to 59% and 41% respectively from 58% and 42%. The College actively promotes non-stereotypical gender recruitment in internal and external recruitment adverts as it endeavours to challenge the stereotypical recruitment cycle.

The gender pay results should therefore be taken in the context of this distribution, which will influence the figures reported.

Gender Pay Calculation 2023	College Data
Average gender pay gap as a mean average	8.64%
Average gender pay gap as a median average	11.12%

Gender Pay Calculation 2020	College Data
Average gender pay gap as a mean average	8.0%
Average gender pay gap as a median average	27.5%

The mean calculation for the College is 8.64%, which is below the national figure of 17.1% as calculated by the Office of National Statistics. The mean gender pay gap in FE colleges often exceeds 15% in some institutions; therefore, the College's mean gender pay gap is significantly better than the average FE college.

The median calculation for the College is 11.12%. This figure reflects the high number of females within the organisation as well as the concentration of female workers in part-time and term-time roles at the lower end of the pay scale. The median gender pay gaps in FE colleges have been reported to range between 10% and 20%, with men typically earning more than women. However, this varies significantly by institution.

## Addressing the Pay Gap

The College has transparent, structured Pay Scales that are not gender specific to ensure employee pay is fair and equal for all genders performing in the same roles.

The College is committed to promoting equality and offers the following initiatives to all employees:

- Flexible working policies
- Parental leave
- Shared parental leave
- Paternity leave
- Training opportunities
- Regular continuous professional development opportunities
- Working from home opportunities where business permits

The College supports women returning to work from maternity leave by promoting keeping in touch days, job sharing, compressed hours, part-time and term-time opportunities and phased returns.

## Ethnicity

Most staff identify themselves as White/British, which is broadly representative of the two boroughs of St Helens (98%) and Knowsley (97%).

Both boroughs have a higher proportion of White/British residents compared to the national average in England (80% White/British in 2011 census). That said, there are small, ethnic minority populations steadily increasing due to migration and generational changes. The proximity to Liverpool is contributing to diversification in parts of Knowsley, especially near Huyton and Prescott.

Ethnicity	Total
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0
Asian or Asian British - Other	2
Black or Black British - African	1
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0
Black or Black British - any other	1
Chinese	0
Mixed - White and Asian	1
Mixed - White and Black African	0
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1
Mixed - any other	0
White British	310
White Irish	2
White - any other	0
White - other European	3
Prefer not to say	6
Any other	0
Unknown	159
<b>Total</b>	<b>487</b>

## **Disability**

The proportion of staff declaring themselves to have a disability has increased to 5.57% in 2024 from 3.64% in 2023. This may be attributable to some people now identifying as having a disability due to a better understanding of what qualifies under the legal definition. With a greater societal focus on mental health and hidden disabilities this may have led employees to feel less stigma about identifying themselves as disabled.

## **Other Protected Characteristics**

The College does not currently collate data in respect of sexual orientation or religion/belief.

Equality and Diversity Objectives:

- To increase the proportion of staff and students, who disclose a protected characteristic, including ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability and religion or belief.
- To reduce gaps in outcomes between different groups of students, ensuring that all students achieve and progress to the best of their ability, regardless of any protected characteristic or disadvantage.
- To continue to develop the embedding of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in the curriculum, ensuring that all students develop a deeper understanding of EDI, so they can recognise and celebrate the value of difference.
- To remove barriers to staff and student recruitment by ensuring that gender, and other stereotyping is eliminated from all marketing and publicity materials used by the College.
- To achieve the Investors in Diversity 'Silver' award through the National Centre for Diversity and embed the concept of FREDIE to foster engagement throughout the College community.