



# Annual Report

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

### 2023/2024



To view this report in an alternative format, please  
contact the College's Marketing Team: 01642 333333

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## Introduction

Middlesbrough College Group aims to be a leading organisation for equality, diversity and inclusion, acknowledging that equality of opportunity and the recognition and promotion of diversity are integral to the success of the organisation, its learners, colleagues and the wider community. This report provides an overview of activity related to equality, diversity and inclusion at Middlesbrough College for the year 2023/2024.

At a time when, globally, nationally and locally, we have seen intolerance of others' differences resulting in harmful and often tragic outcomes, we emphasise our zero-tolerance commitment to discrimination in all its forms, so that Middlesbrough College Group upholds respectful and inclusive spaces for all our learners, colleagues and wider communities.

Middlesbrough College recognises its legal and moral obligations to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality 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.

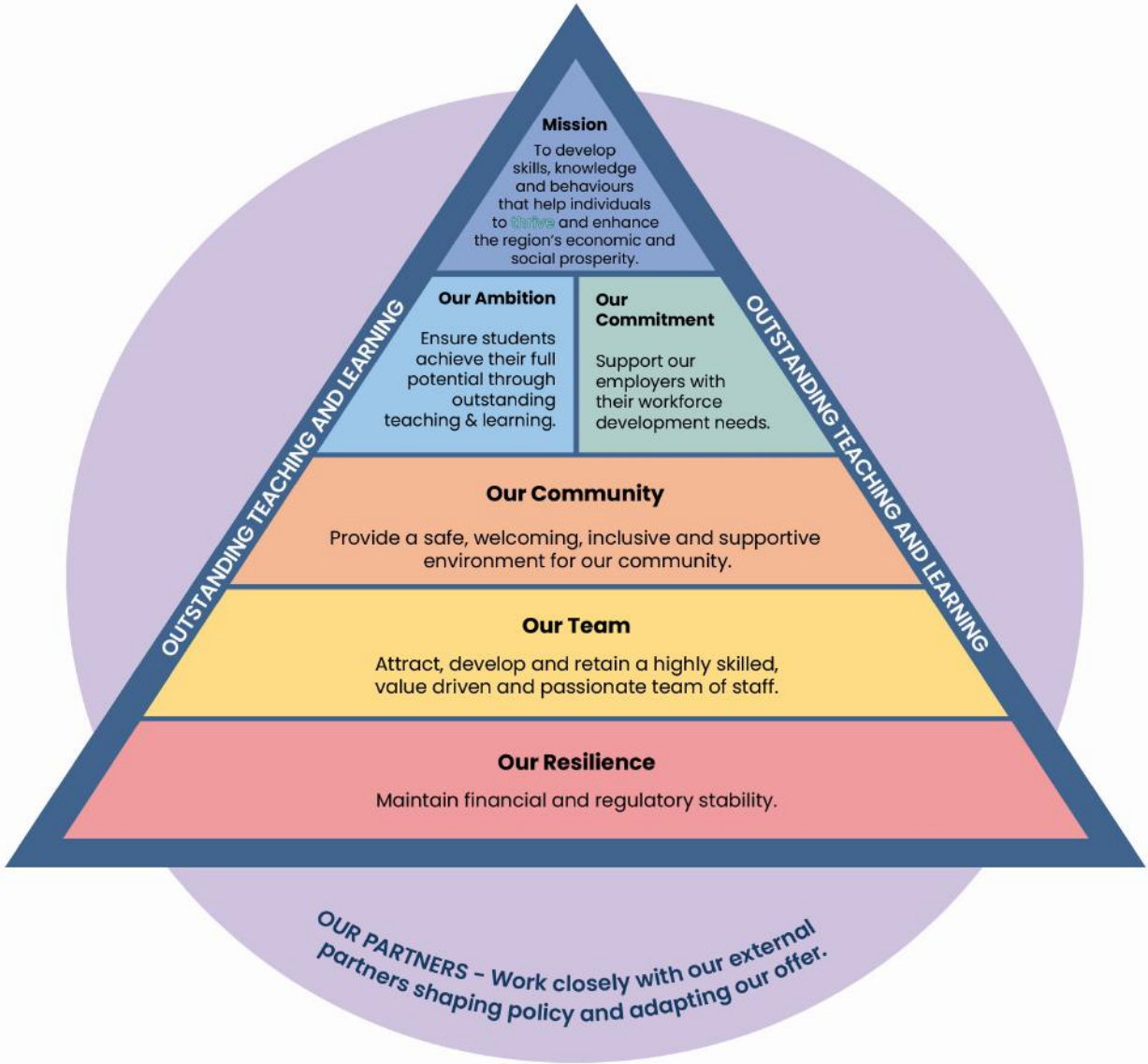
The College considers the impact its policies, decisions and day-to-day activities may have on people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010 and how it is able to positively contribute to the advancement of equality and promote good relations. The protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act are age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation. The College aims to promote all other forms and strands of equality and protect human rights that are relevant.

The College maintains an inclusive working and learning environment where students, staff and visitors can feel welcome, safe, valued and respected, as well as embracing and nurturing the diversity of skills and talent within its current and potential community. The College strives to ensure that curriculum content, materials and delivery, as well as the services we provide, reflect the College's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and continual improvement. Middlesbrough College welcomes and encourages feedback from learners, staff and visitors and uses this, together with analysis of our locally collected data and external assessments, to maintain excellence.

The College holds strategic equality, diversity and inclusion meetings three times per year, chaired by the Principal. This group has representation from across the College, the Governing Body and the local community. The College identifies areas for improvement, together with appropriate strategies each year, which are monitored at via an Equality Action Plan to demonstrate our commitment and ensure continuous improvement.

Curriculum Directors monitor and review a range of student data grouped by individual and intersectional protected characteristics on a weekly basis. This enables early identification of any achievement gaps and the swift implementation of appropriate interventions.

Middlesbrough College’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is fundamental to delivering the College Strategic Priorities and Mission 2023/24:



Our values, developed in consultation with staff and students, represent who we are and how we aim to be perceived by others. We nurture and develop these values across our wider College community and aspire for all staff and students to display these core values at all times:

- Take Responsibility
- Aim High
- Respect Others
- Work Hard
- Do What's Right
- Challenge Yourself
- Take Pride

### Diversity overview of Middlesbrough College staff and students:

	White (British)	All other ethnic groups combined	Not known	Female	Male	Disability	Not known
<b>Staff</b>	82.4%	9.3%	8.3%	60.5%	39.5%	8.5%	27.4%
<b>Students</b>	75.0%	20.7%	4.3%	42.8%	57.2%	27.3%	0.5%
<b>Apprentices</b>	94.5%	5.5%	0%	43.2%	56.8%	21.8%	0.2%

Equality, diversity and inclusion are promoted across the college through:

- Governance and college leadership team
- Equality, diversity and inclusion strategic and operational committees
- Equalities Co-ordinator and departmental staff Equality Champions
- Networks for students and staff who share protected characteristics
- Achievement of awards and quality standards
- Induction, training and continuous professional development of staff
- Marketing materials
- Induction training for students
- Thrive tutorial programme and enrichment activities for students
- Additional learning support for students
- Student Union Officers – Equality, Anti-bullying, Health and Wellbeing
- Celebratory and awareness-raising events linked to the College's equality and diversity calendar.

The College is committed to meeting the needs of those often hardest to engage, including English for Speakers of Other Languages, those with Special Educational Needs, and supporting those not in education, employment or training. The college



works with local schools to support those underachieving at school with discreet provision for 14-16 year-olds, who participate in English and maths, personal social development and vocational learning activities (9 students in 2023/2024).

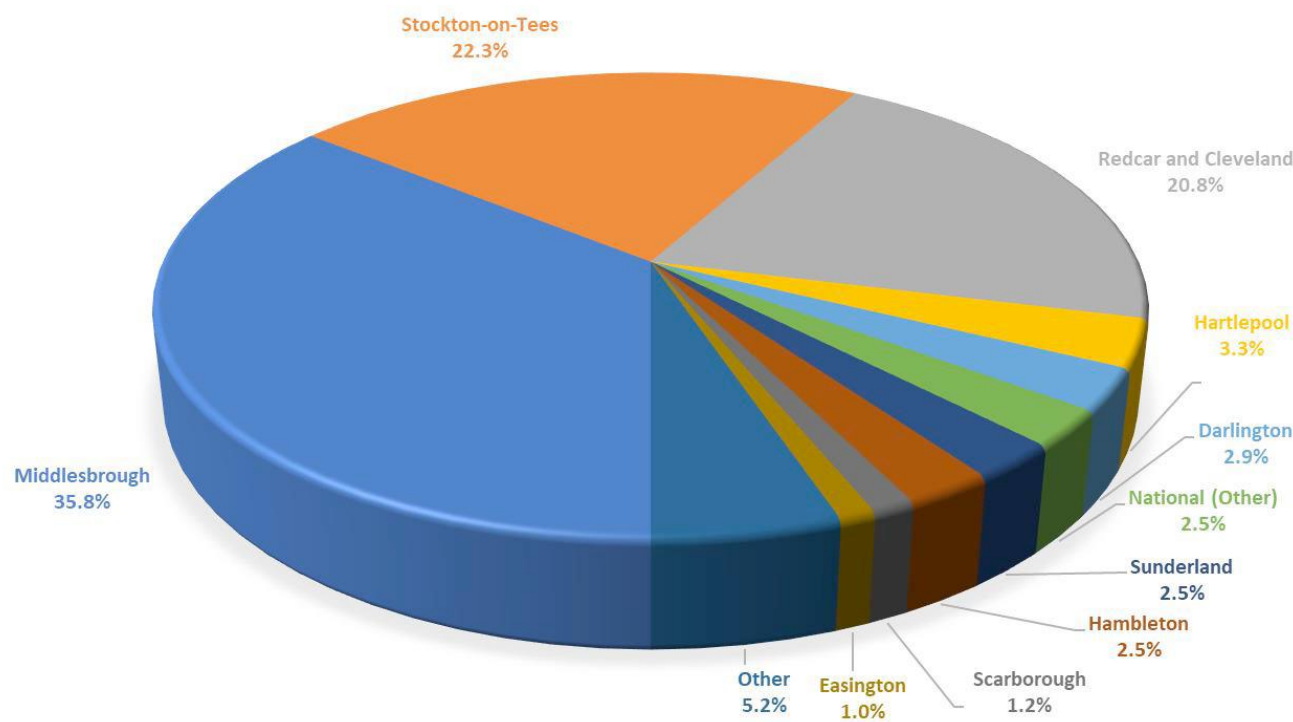
**Equality Action Plan Objective 2023/2024:**  
Implement Equality Impact Assessment procedure, training, reviews and termly audit spot-checking.

**Data**

The data used in this report is gathered from students and directly employed staff. It is compared to local authority data gathered in the last census, which was 2021, data available via Tees Valley Combined Authority (for mid-2020) and other government sources.

Middlesbrough, Darlington, Stockton, Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland data is used within this report where available and appropriate, to reflect the geographical communities many of our students and staff live: our potential community.

**Students by place of residence:**



## Learner Profile by Age, 2023/2024

### < 16

- 30 learners recruited, ↑4
- 73.3% were female, ↓35.3%
- 26.7% were male, ↑35.3%
- 26.7% declared a learning difficulty or disability, ↑3.6%
- 30 % 27% live in an 'area of deprivation', ↑3%

### 16-18

- 5621 learners recruited, ↓35
- 44.6% were female, ↑0.3%
- 55.4% were male, ↓0.3%
- 34% declared a learning difficulty or disability, ↑2%
- 11.5% declared mental health difficulty ↑3.8%
- 10% declared dyslexia ↓3.8%
- 37% live in an 'area of deprivation', ↔
- 14.7% were from an ethnic minority group, ↓0.5%

### 19-23

- 1938 learners recruited, ↓46
- 37.4% were female, ↓0.9%
- 62.6% were male, ↑0.9%
- 33.4% declared a learning difficulty or disability, ↓1.9%
- 7.2% declared mental health difficulty ↓0.5%
- 17.6% declared dyslexia ↑1.7%
- 37.6% live in an 'area of deprivation', ↑0.6%

- 18.1% were from an ethnic minority group, ↑0.9%

### 24+

- 4217 learners recruited, ↓205
- 42.6% were female, ↓0.3%
- 57.4% were male, ↑0.3%
- 15% had a learning difficulty or disability, ↓1.6%
- 4.9% declared mental health difficulty ↓0.6%
- 4.5% declared dyslexia ↓0.7%
- 45.2% lived in an 'area of deprivation', ↑0.4%
- 30% declared they were from an ethnic minority group, ↑3.9%

### Learner Profile: Apprentices (all ages)

- 1663 1645 apprentices recruited, ↑18
- 596 aged 16-18, ↑8
- 689 aged 19-23, ↑12
- 378 aged 24+, ↓2
- 43.2% were female, ↓1.2%
- 56.8% were male, ↑1.2%
- 21.8% declared a learning difficulty or disability, ↑1.5%
- 5.5% declared they were from an ethnic minority group, ↓0.2%

**In 2023/24 Middlesbrough College had 97 students who were "Children looked After", up 8% on the previous year, and 49 care-leavers, 29 (145%) more than in the previous year. 18 students claimed Universal Credit in their own right. 1413 students from a household in receipt of £25,000 per annum or less, or a qualifying benefit, received a means-tested bursary of £350.00.**

Data in this report is given in the context of Middlesbrough College’s overall performance for 2023/2024, according to the latest published data:

*Taking You Higher*

**We did it!**

- 98% overall pass rate for A Levels
- Over two thirds of A Level students achieving high grades
- Triple the number of students studying T Level qualifications
- 55% of BTEC vocational students gained Distinction grades
- Over 785 students progressing to University with 88% at their first-choice University
- In the top 5% in the country for apprenticeships
- We train over 2200 apprentices
- Ofsted Good with six Outstanding grades
- 96% of full-time students secured a positive destination after completing their course

8

**Equality Action Plan Objective 2023/2024:**  
Implement action plan to eradicate identified achievement gaps.



**90%**

I enjoy coming to College.

**95%**

I am treated fairly, equally and with respect

**94%**

The teaching on my course is good.

**95%**

Overall, this is a good college.

**96%**

I know what standards of behaviour are expected.

**94%**

I feel safe at College.

Behaviour and attitudes  
**Outstanding**

Personal development  
**Outstanding**

Leadership and management  
**Outstanding**

Adult learning programmes  
**Outstanding**

Apprenticeships  
**Outstanding**

Provision for learners with high needs  
**Outstanding**



**NORTHERN  
SKILLS**

**TTE**

We are Ofsted Good with **Strong** skills  
and **six Outstanding** features!

## Staff Profile 2023/2024

- 1097 people were directly employed, ↑99
- 39.5% male, ↓1%
- 60.5% female, ↑1%
- 1.9% aged under 20, ↑0.5%
- 17.2% were aged 20–29, ↑0.2%
- 24.3% were aged 30–39, ↑1%
- 22.5% were aged 40–49, ↑0.2%
- 20.5% were aged 50–59, ↓1%
- 13.5% were aged 60+, ↓1%
- 9.3% declared they were from a minority ethnic background, ↑1.7% (8.3% not disclosed, ↓5.2%)
- 8.5% declare a disability, ↑2.7% (23.4% not disclosed, ↓3%)

For additional staff diversity information, please see the relevant protected characteristic section. This report is sectioned according to protected characteristic, however we recognise that intersectionality (having more than one protected characteristic) often creates multiple barriers for individuals and we have included some data information within each section to highlight this.

**Equality Action Plan Objective 2023/2024:**  
Improve diversity of management team.

This report is sectioned according to protected characteristic, however we recognise that intersectionality (having more than one protected characteristic) often creates multiple barriers for individuals and we have included information within each section to highlight this.

## Age

“Age” covers specific ages, but also age groups, for example ‘mid-30s’, ‘under 18s’, ‘young person’, ‘elderly’. The Equality Act includes exceptions, for example school children are not protected from discrimination at school.

The UK's age structure is shifting towards older ages because of declining fertility rates and people living longer. The number of people of pensionable age relative to the size of those of expected working age is increasing (Office for National Statistics), however, the number of workers aged 65 years and over is increasing. Life expectancy is 88 years for males, and 91 years for females, born in the UK in 2024.

The population of Tees Valley was estimated to be 678,200 in 2021, an increase of 9,900 since 2015. 61% are aged 16-64 years, compared to 63% nationally; 19.5% are aged 0-15 and 65+ (North East Chamber of Commerce).

The age profile of the Tees Valley region is diverse: 20.8% of the population is aged 0-15 years; 62.4% are ‘working age’ (16-64), while 16.8% are aged over 65. A balanced approach is needed to services and infrastructure to meet the needs of younger and older residents. The college strategic team observes this data closely, to ensure the college is prepared to meet the demands of future cohorts of students (ONS)

Middlesbrough College supports and promotes the “Please have a seat campaign” in its premises in Middlesbrough, offering a place to rest and have a drink of water for those who need it.



**I support Age Friendly Middlesbrough**

### Students:

The age range of the learners who enrolled during 2023/24 was 15 to 84 years: the oldest student successfully completed Functional Skills courses in English and maths. Children from age 2 make use of the College's [Gymworld](#) facilities.

### Staff:

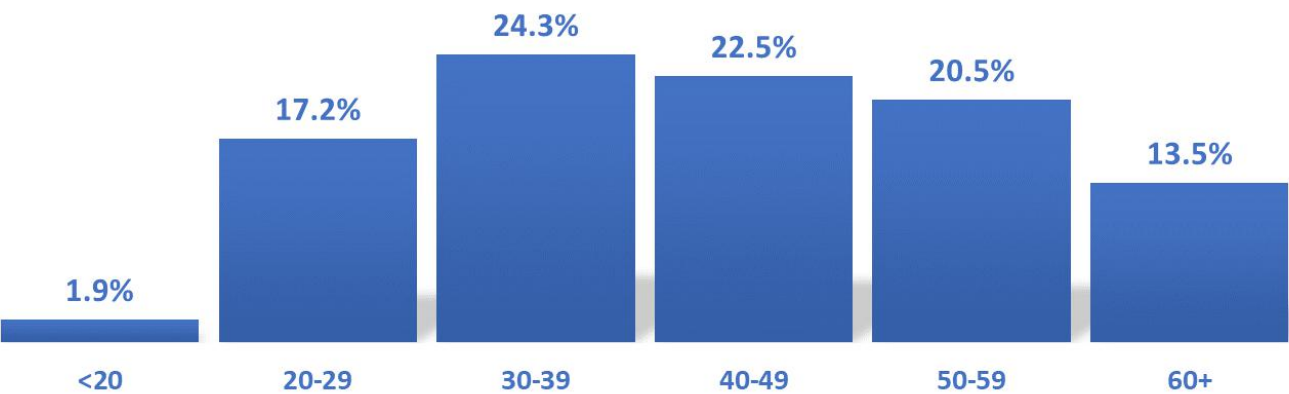
The College offers apprenticeship placements to attract more applicants from the under 20 age range and is committed to increasing the proportion of apprentices.

The College recognises the benefits that employing and retaining an age-diverse workforce brings and has options available to those who wish to continue working beyond normal (state) pension age.

An apprentice network was set up for Middlesbrough College staff in 2023/2024 to provide informal peer support.

A 2019 survey conducted by the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) found that three in five menopausal women—usually aged between 45 and 55—were negatively affected at work. Women feeling compelled to give up work at the peak of their careers is neither inevitable nor normal. A Menopause Network forms part of the commitment to colleagues via the Menopause Policy, recognising the benefits of meeting needs of colleagues who may experience a wide-range of symptoms due to hormone changes. The college also acknowledge that menopause can happen at any age and provides support to all.

**Staff profile by age:**



In the subsequent sections, student data for other protected characteristics is compared against the age brackets 14-16, 16-18 and 19+.

**Disability**

“Disability” means a physical or mental condition that has (or has had) a substantial and long-term impact on a person’s ability to carry out common day-to-day activities. People diagnosed with progressive conditions, for example cancer or multiple sclerosis, are covered from diagnosis. The latest national and local data available is presented in the following paragraphs.



In 2020/21, the proportion of UK disabled people without a qualification was 13.3%, compared to 4.6% of non-disabled people. In 2020/21 42.7% of non-disabled people had a degree, compared to 24.9% of those with a disability. Achievement in each group has improved since 2013, however the gap remains consistent (House of Commons Research Briefing: UK Disability Statistics, 2022). 33.2% of people included in “economic inactivity” data in Tees Valley are long-term sick, compared to 28.1% in Great Britain. (Labour Market Profile – Tees Valley, 2024).

Accessing training, education and employment can increase incomes, pension rights, career prospects and social networks, emotional and physical wellbeing and reduces the risk of social exclusion.

- The percentage of pupils in England with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan has increased to 4.8% in 2024, continuing a trend of increases since 2016.
- The percentage of pupils in England with SEN but no EHC plan (SEN support) has increased to 13.6%, an increase in 0.6% over the past year and continuing an increasing trend.
- The most common type of need for those in England with an EHC plan is Autistic Spectrum Disorders and for those with SEN support, Speech, Language and Communication needs.

(Special Educational Needs in England, Academic Year 2024, gov.uk)

19.2% of pupils in Tees Valley have a need for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, slightly higher than the 18.4% across England: approximately 1500 young people (0–25 years old), living in Middlesbrough have an EHC plan; 415 new EHC plans were set up in 2023.

The Additional Learning Support (ALS) Team offers a wide range of support services to enable access to the education and social environments of the College. A large team of experienced and trained staff work closely with students, schools, outside agencies and tutors to provide individual support packages.

**The college’s [Disability Statement](#) clarifies the College’s commitment to supporting existing and potential staff, students and visitors to access our premises and services, reduce and eliminate barriers to participation and have the best opportunities for successful outcomes. A wide range of support is available via our Additional Learning Support Team. [More](#)**

**information** can be found on the college website, or the team can be contacted directly on 01642 333727.

### Disabled Students by Age Group:

	< 16	16 – 18	19–23	24+
<b>Total Disability disclosed</b>	30%	52.3%	52.5%	22.1%
<b>Dyslexia</b> (% of all students for age group)	10%	10%	17.6%	4.5%
<b>Mental health difficulties</b> (% of all students for age group)	13%	11.5%	7.2%	4.9%

**Multiple disabilities are often reported: 3221 learners disclosed 4918 learning difficulties or disabilities, with dyslexia continuing to be the most prevalent type among the 19–23 age groups; mental health difficulties are now the most prevalent in the <16, 16–18 age groups and 24+ age groups. Note that *Learners may include sight issues that are corrected by spectacles in “vision impairment” disclosures, which leads to higher-than-expected disclosure in this category.***

In the UK, 11% of children and 23% of working age people have a disability. Disability prevalence is notably higher in the North East of England (21.2%); approximately 20.5% of people living in the Tees Valley region have a disability (ONS Census 2021). These figures are a slight increase from the last census and show a growing need for accessible services that meet the needs of disabled individuals in healthcare, social support, community engagement and education.

The College’s Supported Internships is a study programme designed to provide students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities with supported opportunities to experience meaningful employment, whilst also studying. The study programme incorporates English, maths and employability. Watch our video to find out more [here](#).



Teaching staff have access to a range of training and resources to help them support learners, in collaboration with other staff, with a range of learning difficulties and disabilities, which helps challenge stigma and identifies strategies that benefit all learners, staff and visitors.

The College's Thrive tutorial programme provides awareness-raising sessions to students on a range of disabilities.

Apprenticeship staff have worked with DWP staff through the Disability Confident Scheme to better support apprentices through learning provision and in placement, working with employers to increase understanding of disability, reasonable adjustment and support schemes.

Activities are held in the College's public areas throughout the year for staff, students and visitors, which contribute to raising awareness of the needs of others. Middlesbrough College "Works Towards being Dementia Friendly" with Dementia Action Teesside, who provide Dementia Friends training for staff and students.

All students at Middlesbrough College have access to a free and confidential [counselling service](#) and information and support for mental health.

Height-adjustable tables in the cafes and braille signage compliment an accessible environment throughout. A disability audit carried out in autumn 2023 assists Middlesbrough College Group to prioritise further enhancements to the college environment as recommended actions are completed and learning is applied throughout the estate, including new buildings.

Physical activity opportunities are varied and accessible, benefitting physical and mental health for all. The College's Enrichment Officer encourages more students to get involved with sporting activities, particularly those who are often difficult to engage, including developing safe and positive experiences for disabled students and continuing to proactively engage new and existing students.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into the curriculum, for example, students in some curriculum areas learn sector-relevant British sign language and dementia-friendly practices.

Middlesbrough College has received national recognition for the support it gives students who are young carers. The Carers Trust and The Children's Society have singled out the College for the way it helps young carers who struggle studying while looking after a loved one. In recognition, the college has picked up a prestigious Young Carers in Schools Award. Read more [here](#).



### Equality Action Plan Objective 2023/2024:

Improve building accessibility by following accessibility audit recommendations.

#### Staff

Middlesbrough College has been validated as a **Disability Confident Leader**, ensuring that disabled people and those with long term health conditions have opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations as employees of Middlesbrough College. Leadership status acknowledges a commitment to promoting the Disability Confident Scheme in our supply chain.



The disability pay gap – the gap between median pay for disabled employees and their non-disabled counterparts was 14.6% in 2023 (TUC), with disabled people earning £1.90 per hour less. Disabled women have a higher pay gap than disabled men. The college disability pay gap (median), as at November 2023, is substantially below this at 9.2%. 10% of disabled people who are also BME are in work, compared to 1 in 40 of disabled people who are white British.

For further information on disability, required as part of the college's Disability Confidence Leader status, please refer to Appendix 1.

#### **Gender Re-assignment**

"Gender Reassignment" means when a person's gender identity (physiological or other gender attributes) is different to the gender assigned at birth. It is not necessary to have undergone specific treatment or surgery and the person can be at any stage in their transition. The protected characteristic of gender reassignment covers binary genders only: male or female.

Currently, the Department for Education and staff pension schemes require legal, binary genders to be recorded. Staff and students are, however, invited to use 'known as' names and specify pro-nouns, which the college community will respect.

3765 of 11086 students (32%) provided a pro-noun during enrolment in 2023-2024. Of those who provided a pro-noun, 3.6% provided a pro-noun that has not traditionally been linked to their legal sex. Pro-nouns used include He/Him, He/They, She/Her, She/They, They/Them, Xe/Xem, Ze/Zie/Hir, Ze/Zie/They.

Did you know?

The gender-neutral term for a niece/nephew is "nibling".

The gender-neutral term for an aunt/uncle is "pibling".

Reminder: the gender-neutral term for brother/sister is "sibling".

Bonus: Add an 's' to use the word to describe the categories collectively.

The college is committed to supporting students and staff who transition: students can speak in confidence to a Safeguarding and Welfare Officer; staff can speak to a HR Business Partner (up to date details for the single point of contact can be found in the [Trans Guidance for Staff and Students](#)).

The first question on gender identity was asked in the 2021 Census and only to people aged 16+. 0.5% answered "No" to the question "Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth". 6% did not answer the question. Of those who answered a follow-up question, one third answered "trans man"; one-third answered "trans woman" and one-third answered "non-binary" or described their gender identity in another way (Gender identity, England and Wales: Census 2021).

Although staff and students are invited to provide data as part of our data collection exercises, numbers disclosing are too low to report.

Local organisation, Hart Gables, provides confidential support to students at drop-in sessions and has provided training to key staff. Staff across college access mandatory online training.

LGBT\* support networks are available in college for staff and students and there are popular events through the year to promote inclusion and support for trans staff and students, including Pride Parade in February.

College service provision, activities and policies are mindfully inclusive, for example, Menopause Guidance covers hormone changes, which may be relevant to some trans staff.

## **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

In employment, “Marriage and Civil Partnership” means someone in a legal marriage or partnership, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Protections are not extended to single people under the Equality Act 2010.

Census (England and Wales) information tells us that the proportion of adults who have never married or been in a civil partnership increases every decade across all local authorities, religious and ethnic groups. The proportion of adults who are divorced has remained consistent at 9%, however people are divorcing later in life. The census also reveals that adults in same-sex marriages and civil partnerships are likely to be younger, have no religion and have higher level qualifications than adults in opposite-sex marriages.

In the 2021 Census, 39.5% of people in Middlesbrough were married or in a registered civil partnership. 0.3% were in a same-sex marriage or civil partnership. 43.1% were single and had never married (up 11.6% over the previous decade) and 11% were separated or divorced.

**50.4% of staff identify as married or in a civil partnership; 31.5% identify as single, separated or divorced.**

## **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Workers and job applicants are protected from “Pregnancy and Maternity” discrimination throughout their pregnancy and for two weeks immediately after the pregnancy ends. Employees taking compulsory, ordinary and additional maternity leave (including shared parental leave) are also protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010.

Overall, fertility rates in England and Wales continue to fall, however women over 40 years have higher age-specific fertility rates than those under 20. The total fertility rate (TFR) decreased to 1.44 children per woman in 2023, continuing the decreasing trend since 2010 and the lowest level on record.

Middlesbrough College Groups respects the rights of those breastfeeding to do so on our premises.

Middlesbrough College supported 31 members of staff taking maternity, paternity or adoption leave during the 2023/24 academic year, a decrease of 6 on the previous year. No colleagues utilised the Shared Parental leave provision.

## **Race**

“Race” covers colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origins, which may not be the same as a person’s current nationality. Most surveys ask questions based on ethnicity and that is what is reported in this section.

Long-term international migration continues to be the main driver of the UK’s population growth (ONS, 2021). Middlesbrough grew from a town of 25 people in 1801 to a town of 90,000 inhabitants by 1900 as workers were attracted by employment in the town’s port and steel industries. Most of the early workers moved from within the UK and Ireland, with a smaller number moving from eastern European countries. Smaller numbers moved from further afield. Industrialist, Henry Bolckow, born in Germany, became the town’s first Mayor and MP in 1853. Immigration continues to be the primary reason for the expansion of the town, with an estimated 148,215 inhabitants in 2021 (Census 2021).

Every local authority area across the North East saw a rise in the percentage of people who did not identify with any national identity associated with the UK, as the regional percentage grew from 2.9% to 4.1%. Middlesbrough saw the North East’s largest percentage-point rise in the proportion of people who did not identify with any national identity associated with the UK (from 4.8% in 2011 to 7.9% in 2021).



Despite being a town proudly grown from the contributions of people from across the world, Middlesbrough has not escaped racial tensions. In 1840, when work started on Middlesbrough Dock, the site of Middlesbrough College campus, 800 people, wielding tools as weapons, tried to violently drive the 400-strong Irish workers off site; in 1961 Middlesbrough made headline news around the world when 3-days of violent protests, known as the Canon Street Riots, followed the killing of an 18-year-old man, leading to divisions in the community. Over the summer of 2024, misinformation regarding the tragic deaths of three young people in Southport was used as a reason for rioting in towns and cities around the UK, including Middlesbrough. While news coverage frequently showed the burning of cars, smashing and looting of shops and business premises, including Teesside University, we must acknowledge the impact this has on local people, including our own staff and students, who were, and remain, frightened for their own and their families' safety. The violent scenes do not represent the views of the majority in our diverse and welcoming town, and it was humbling to see support for the clean-up operation, again including students and staff. The impact on people is not so easy to fix, but remains our primary concern. Middlesbrough College remains an inclusive and welcoming space for everyone. Anyone affected can reach out for support via college services – students via Safeguarding and Welfare Officers; staff via Health and Wellbeing Champions, their line manager or Human Resources Business Partner.



Students play a game using chopsticks as part of a week-long cultural diversity celebration in college, March 2024.

Within the growth of local ethnic minority communities, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of children for whom English is not their first language: between 2005 and 2018 the proportion increased from 11% to 21.2% among primary school children and from 9% to 16.6% among those of secondary school age. This covers those cases where a child was exposed to a language other than English during their early development and continues to be exposed to this language within

the home or in their community. Census 2021 identifies that 92.4% of people living in Middlesbrough speak English well or very well. Population estimates indicate that ethnic and language diversity in and around Middlesbrough continues to increase.

In the year ending July 2021, white people made up 85.7% of apprenticeship starts and 81.0% of the general population in England (based on data from the 2021 Census).

The average pass rate over all our ESOL classes is 85.6%. Learners who do not pass are given opportunities to develop further and placed on suitable alternative provisions to further their learning journey and achieve their goals.

For tutors at the College, embracing diversity comes as second nature and supporting inclusion is a top priority, whether it is singing the national anthem for Eritrea's Independence Day, celebrating Nowruz, marking Ukrainian national teachers' day and encouraging participation in cross-college events. Tutors systematically display values of humanitarianism, compassion, and professionalism.

#### **Student profile by ethnicity:**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>%</b>
African	478	4.05
Any other Asian background	289	2.45
Any other Black / African / Caribbean background	54	0.45
Any other ethnic group	358	3.0
Any Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	105	0.89
Any Other White background	307	2.6
Arab	201	1.7
Bangladeshi	35	0.3
Caribbean	34	0.3
Chinese	15	0.12
English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	8859	75.04
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	14	0.12
Indian	47	0.4
Irish	12	0.1
Not provided	501	4.2
Pakistani	352	2.98
White and Asian	85	0.72
White and Black African	50	0.4
White and Black Caribbean	34	0.29
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11,806</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Ethnic minority groups % per Tees Valley Local Authority (2021 data) compared to Middlesbrough College student profile:

Local Authority/area	% of population - ethnic minority	% of students - ethnic minority	Number of students	Number of Students - ethnic minority
Middlesbrough	17.7%	35.4%	4225	1494
Darlington	5.8%	13.2%	341	45
Stockton	7.9%	16.4%	2635	433
Hartlepool	3.5%	22.4%	393	88
Redcar and Cleveland	2.3%	15.4%	2452	379
Tees Valley	7.9%	24.3%	10046	2439
North East	9.4%			

**Networks** are arranged termly for staff and students who share protected characteristics. The groups provide an opportunity for peer-support, feeding back through the Equalities Co-ordinator and contribute to identifying solutions where data shows improvement is needed.

Middlesbrough College is proud to sponsor Tees Valley BME Awards. Now in its twelfth year, the Tees Valley BME Awards highlight and celebrate multi-culturalism in the local community. Read more [here](#). We are delighted that a small number of students from our ESOL courses have accompanied College staff to the annual celebrations. Student **Youssef Sacko won the Young Achiever in Education – category at the awards in 2023.**

The Race at Work Charter was launched by the Government in October 2018 and gives businesses a clear set of actions to work towards helping to create greater opportunities for ethnic minority employees at work. The College has committed to the following Race at Work Charter principles:

Appoint a Race Champion at Board Level: [Governor Sara Mirsalehi](#) is our Race Champion.

1. Capturing and publicising ethnicity data – important for establishing a baseline and measuring progress and a crucial step towards organisational reporting on ethnicity pay differentials.

2. Board level commitment to zero tolerance on bullying and harassment: giving commitment from the top that bullying and harassing behaviour will not be tolerated in the organisation, creating an environment where people feel safe to report incidents of bullying and harassment, and understand that the appropriate channels are in place to support them to do so.
3. Ensuring that tackling equality and inclusion is the responsibility of all leaders and managers within the organisation.
4. Supporting the progress of ethnic minority talent in recruitment and progression.
5. Support Race Inclusion allies in the workplace.
6. Include Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse-led enterprise owners in supply chains.



Analysis on pay gaps by the ONS, using data from the Annual Population Survey 2012-2022, found that when looking at the cumulative effect of characteristics that determine pay, occupation, qualifications, geography, age and sex had a greater impact than ethnicity and country of birth, however, black, African, Caribbean and black British employees earned 5.6% less than white employees, which has been consistent since 2012.

## **Religion or belief**

"Religion" includes any organised religion with a clear structure and belief system. The Equality Act also protects people who do not follow a religion or belief. "Belief" must be serious and apply to an important aspect of human life or behaviour, be worthy of respect in a democratic society and not affect other people's fundamental rights. In January 2020, an employment tribunal found that 'ethical veganism' is entitled to protection under the Equality Act, 2010; an employment tribunal and subsequent appeal in September 2024 found that 'English Nationalism' did not pass the threshold for protection under the Act.



Middlesbrough residents reporting “no religion” increased from 22.3% in 2011 to 36.4% in 2021, while in the North East the figure rose from 23.4% to 40%, and across England from 24.8% to 36.7%. Those describing themselves as Christian fell to 46% from 63.2% a decade earlier; those describing themselves as Muslim rose to 10.2%, up from 7%. Those identifying with another religion, including Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and other accounted for just 2% of the population.

Middlesbrough College students were invited to disclose their religion as part of a data collection exercise during the 2020/2021 academic year. 64.1% answered “no religion”, 23% answered Christian (all denominations), 4.5% answered Muslim. 3.4% answered ‘prefer not to say’, 5% answered ‘other’. ‘Other’ included small numbers of Buddhists, Jews, Sikhs and Pagans.

The College’s Equality and Diversity calendar identifies special dates for many religions. Middlesbrough College offers up to four approved absences to accommodate religious festivals which fall within term-time. An increasing number of multi-faith prayer/quiet contemplation spaces are provided for those of all faiths or none, with additional spaces available for use during Ramadan. Washing facilities are also available for those who need them. Where it has been possible (on a very small scale), the College has adjusted timetables to accommodate students who wish to attend mosque on Fridays. Tutors at the Adult and Community Learning team support adult ESOL students to prayer over lunchtime in the classroom and this has prompted discussions about alternatives to attending mosque, should this be needed to fulfil future employment expectations.

We are delighted that a local Imam was able to join our Remembrance Day Service in 2023 and look forward to expanding this across other religions in coming years.



Students and staff also have access to an onsite Chaplain. Find out more [here](#).

## Equality Action Plan Objective 2023/2024:

Expand multi-faith and quiet contemplation space provision and strengthen related community links.

### Staff

**39.6% of staff who provided data answered Christian (all denominations); 31.2% of staff answered "no religion", "Atheist or "Agnostic"; 4% answered "other", including a small number of Buddhists, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Parsis.**

### **Sex (and Gender)**

"Sex" can mean male or female, or groups of men, boys, women, girls. "Sex" is the classification given based on reproductive organs and is generally seen as binary, i.e., male or female. "Gender" is based on social roles or behaviours and as this is a personal interpretation: the category an individual chooses to identify with may not match the sex they were assigned at birth and may be binary or non-binary. The College has recently provided staff and students with opportunities to have their gender and pro-nouns recorded. Legal (binary) sex is required to be collected in relation to students (by Department for Education in respect of funding) and staff (in relation to pensions). A small number of staff and students have identified as 'non-binary'/other identities in data collection exercises.

Nationally, although girls at all ages in education are more likely to out-perform boys, getting higher grades and more likely to go to university, they are less likely to see that educational attainment translate to more highly paid employment, with males more likely to get 'highly skilled' jobs straight after university.

Middlesbrough College is committed to promoting gender equality as an employer and in its provision of education and services, analyses data by gender, identifying achievement gaps where they exist, implementing strategies to provide solutions and challenging and changing gender norms in wider society. This includes in areas where men are disadvantaged.

A 2019 article from the Gender Equality Unit of The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development cited a general lack in confidence in maths among girls as the main reason subject choice became more accentuated post-16, where females predominantly enrol on courses that lead to careers in often lower-paid

professions, such as hair and beauty, catering and health and care, with starkly very few seeking careers in construction, engineering and computing. This is reflected in Middlesbrough College student choice and we continue to take action to address this, for example introducing female students to working environments that they may not have previously considered. Through STEM investment, the college is working closely with industry and advocates to redress the balance.

Across its engineering courses, which cover all aspects including Mechanical Maintenance, Electrical Maintenance, Instrumentation and Control and Wind Turbine Technicians, there have been rises in the proportion of places being taken up by women. For example, last year saw a 30% rise in female engineering students and TTE Associate Director John Cooke believes that trend is set to continue. John says: "I'm pleased and proud to say we have had many female learners secure apprenticeships and also progress onto some fantastic careers in engineering locally, nationally and also around the world."

Students are able to select their own workwear from our supplier's catalogue, whether they need male, female or unisex garments.



The Future Female leaders Programme was launched in October 2023. The long-term project, organised and run by the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) and campaign group Power of Women, aims to help young women students



at Middlesbrough College embarking on careers in construction and related sectors with a series of events, workplace visits, talks and mentoring sessions to encourage and support their workplace ambitions. It is hoped those taking part will not only go onto successful careers in the sector, but can act as role models for the next generation of women in construction.



The College's enrichment programme, Live Well Learn Well, aims to get more students involved with a wide variety of sporting activities, particularly those who are often difficult to engage, including females.

## Staff

The **gender pay gap** is a measure of the difference between men and women's average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. **Equal pay** means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, a requirement of the Equal Pay Act, 1970, which was replaced by the Equality Act 2010.

9,000 employers, including Middlesbrough College, are required to publish **gender pay gap** figures annually, from April 2018. Middlesbrough College is committed to working towards gender pay neutrality, with a requirement that work is undertaken to narrow any gaps. The Gender Pay Gap Analysis for November 2023 shows the median gap to be 10%, substantially below the UK gender pay gap of 15.4%. The most recent report will always be available on the College website.

The College has flexible working conditions for all staff, including term-time only working to fit in with family/childcare arrangements. The College's policy is to deliver as many contracted services in-house as possible, including catering and cleaning, which can impact on the gender pay gap.

## **Sexual Orientation**

"Sexual Orientation" refers to who someone is sexually or romantically attracted to and includes, but is not limited to, heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual.

In 2021, for the first time in a Census for England and Wales, people over the age of 16 were asked a question about their sexual orientation. 3.2% of respondents answered "gay or lesbian", "bisexual" or "other sexual orientation", which is an increase of 0.5% on previous estimates in 2019 (ons.gov.uk). Younger people aged 16-24 years were more likely to identify as LGB+ (6.91%), with 4% identifying as bisexual. The proportion of people identifying as LGB+ decreased with each older age grouping. The 16-24 age group was the only group who had a higher proportion of bisexual respondents compared to those who answered gay or lesbian. 2.2% of Middlesbrough's population answered that they have a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual (Census 2021).

"Just 53% of Gen Z are exclusively straight, and 40% have a pattern of attraction that could be described as queer (i.e., outside the scope of exclusively heterosexual attractions between cisgender people). This suggests that in a single lifetime we may have travelled from a world in which lesbian, gay, bi and



queer relationships were hidden and LGBTQ+ people were criminalised, to one in which we are a thriving and growing community.” (Rainbow Britain Report, Stonewall, 2022).

Local organisation, Hart Gables, provides regular drop-in support session for students and training for staff. Separate support networks for LGBT+ staff and students are held in the College. Feedback from the groups can help the college improve its policies and service provision. The student network works with key staff to arrange Pride parades and activities.



### Students

Middlesbrough College collected student data sexual orientation during the 2020/2021 academic year. 77.7% answered “heterosexual”, 3.6% answered “gay” and 8% identified as bisexual. 4.7% identified as “other”; 6% preferred not to say.

### Staff

In 2024, 78.1% of staff are heterosexual; 1.7% are bisexual; 2.7% are gay or lesbian. 17.2% preferred not to say or did not respond.

## Deprivation, Child Poverty and Education

Middlesbrough local authority has been identified as having the largest proportions of highly deprived neighbourhoods in England (English Indices of Deprivation, 2019). The indices consider income deprivation, employment deprivation, education, skills and training deprivation, health deprivation and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services, living environment deprivation. Of the 20 local authorities with the highest proportions of children living in income-deprived households, Middlesbrough ranks 1<sup>st</sup> – 32.7%, Hartlepool, 8<sup>th</sup> – 28.3% and Redcar and Cleveland, 19<sup>th</sup> – 25.6%.

In 2024, 24.6% of pupils in England are eligible for free school meals (FSM), up from 23.8% in 2023. In the North East, 31.2% of pupils are eligible for FSM, the highest FSM eligibility rate in England, up from 18.4% in 2016:. As of January 2023, 36% of pupils in state-funded schools in Middlesbrough were in receipt of FSM, significantly higher than the national average of 24.6% (Schools, pupils and their characteristics, gov.uk).

Local Authorities in England report that the number of Children Looked After (CLA) continues to rise: 84,000 in March 2024, up 2.3% on the previous year. This includes 71 children per 10,000 who are or have been in care of the local authority, in a range of settings, for more than 24 hours. The number of children in the care of each local authority in Tees Valley is significantly higher than the national rate. As of 31 March 2024, 154.2 children per 10,000 were looked after in Middlesbrough; 139 children per 10,000 were looked after in Hartlepool; 134 children per 10,000 were looked after in Stockton-on-Tees; 149.3 children per 10,000 were looked after in Redcar and Cleveland and 142 children per 10,000 were looked after in Darlington.

41% of children in care live in an area away from where they grew up. A “care leaver” has been adopted, returned home or turned 18 following a period of being looked after. Additional support is provided to assist the transition for those who have turned 18. Looked after children are more likely to require support for physical, mental and emotional health needs.

In 2023/2024

- 40% of Middlesbrough College learners resided in an area of deprivation.
- bursaries of £1200 per year were given to 136 students who were either in care, had left care or were in receipt of Universal Credit in their own name.

- bursaries of £350 per year were given to 1365 students with a household income of less than £25,000 or a means tested benefit during the 2023/2024 academic year.
- 1814 learners benefitted from fee remission due to low income, up from 227 in 22/23. Of these, 1581 were in the Tees Valley Combined Authority area and 233 were outside and funded via ESFA. The TVCA low-income threshold is higher than that for ESFA funded learners.

Free emergency period products are available to any learner who needs them.

**Middlesbrough College aims to ensure that full-time students have access to a personal digital device, which they will use on campus and at home while they gain their qualification. During the 2023/2024 academic year, 2250 devices were made available to students.**



# Our student perks

Did you know that Middlesbrough College offers some of the best student perks in the North East? We know how expensive life can be – and we want your student life to be as great as we know it can be. That's why we offer the best student perks in the region!

Head to our website for full details of our student perks!



## Travel



### Travel by Bus

We offer students FREE\* weekday bus travel up to 7pm to and from Middlesbrough College

### MC Mover

A FREE student shuttle bus to and from Middlesbrough Bus Station direct to Middlesbrough College

### Travel by Train

We offer FREE\* reimbursed weekday train travel to and from Middlesbrough College

\*Free travel for all students eligible for a bursary and £5 admin fee per term for all other students.



24 [www.mbro.ac.uk](http://www.mbro.ac.uk)

## Financial help



Students receive help whilst they study with:

- Bursaries
- Support with equipment, costs, and residentials
- Support with childcare
- Other course related costs

Financial help and bursaries are all subject to status and means testing.



£15 printing credit and subsidised stationery costs



FREE Wi-Fi



Access to exciting enrichment activities



10% discount on great food



FREE College meals\*

\*(If you currently receive free school meals, this could continue at College)

Please see our website for more details.



20% discount on hair and beauty treatments, plus a free haircut in your first term!



Subsidised childcare costs



College gym membership for just a one-off £10 fee!

25

The Education Policy Institute, 2020, reports that pupils from low-income backgrounds are on average a year and a half behind their peers by the end of secondary school, a gap which has remained relatively unchanged over the past decade.

As of June 2024, 24.6% of those “economically inactive” in the Tees Valley were students, compared with 20.2% in the North East and 27.2% in England (Labour Market Profile – Tees Valley, ONS).

The **Adult and Community Learning** Department in Middlesbrough College aims to reduce the number of residents with no qualifications by engaging those who would not ordinarily access education. The department provides learning and support opportunities to: those who are long-term unemployed; those living in areas of deprivation/rural isolation; adults with low or no qualifications/ skills; adults/families with low income; those with learning difficulties and disabilities and mental health conditions; and those who do not have English as their first language. Delivering practical sessions in community hubs gives us the opportunity to engage with the wider population.

Introductory courses are offered for the following sector-based work academies: security, warehousing, health and care, construction, customer service, catering, facilities. All give the learners a taste of what to expect when they go into the industry, the employment opportunities available and how to access them. The confidence-building courses offered (including floristry, Asian cookery and sewing) aim to encourage people that would not ordinarily access education opportunities. All learners are encouraged to progress either onto an additional course or into employment. Support is available for the learners within the community with CV writing, job applications, access to IT facilities, careers advice and guidance to help them progress. In many instances, the provision is a means to create a positive environment for learners to gain confidence and life skills as a starting point where the individuals are further away from the labour market.

During the last academic year (2023/2024), 2188 learners attended courses with the Adult and Community Learning Team, an increase of almost 30% on the previous year.





Congratulations to winners  
Bala and Selmawit,  
representing ACL  
At Middlesbrough College's  
Student of the Year Awards  
2024!



**Middlesbrough College Commercial Catering team catered for local children outside of term-time in 2023/24 through the Holiday Activities & Food programme:**

- 325 meals during the Easter holidays
- 4,500+ meals during the summer holidays

**They also supported MFC Foundation engagement programmes, a Cash for Kids initiative, fundraised for Redcar RNLI and Northeast Air Ambulance through the Christmas Market and manage collection tins at outlets for other local charities.**

## Accessibility

The College's course information can be provided in a range of formats for learners with specific requirements. Information can be issued in large print, braille, audio or another language on request. We also produce a yearly transitions information book, which highlights the range of additional support available to students. Throughout the year, we actively promote the careers guidance and additional learning support team who can also provide further information to those who need it.

Accessibility tool, ReciteMe is provided on the College's website. ReciteMe provides options to each visitor so that they can use the website in the way that works best for them.



### 课程指南



南 2025/2026



2025/2026 年 A 级课程指南



工程全日制课程指南



2025/2026 高等教育课程指南



2024/2025 高等教育入学指南



成人课程指南 2024/2025

Our recruitment process fosters an inclusive approach which ensures the needs of individual students are met. Additional support can be provided during the interview process for those who have a disability or learning difficulty; this may include a BSL interpreter or an assisted interview.

Throughout the year, our school's liaison team works in partnership with additional learning support to visit a range of specialist schools throughout Teesside. Specific tours and taster sessions can also be organised to strengthen and support the transitions process into further education for a range of learners.

## Fundraising

Involving staff, students and our wider community in fundraising activities is an excellent way of promoting the message and goals of the charity; fundraising for a charity that has a personal connection – that they, or a family member will benefit from – can help them feel empowered.

During the 2023–2024 academic year, more than £18,000 was raised for charities including local food banks, Alzheimer's Society, Hearing Dogs, Cancer Research and Macmillan, mental health charities, MFC Foundation.

Students and staff complete social action projects. "Walk into the Light" saw students and staff from across the college walking from Tees Barrage at 6.30am to reach college for just after 8.00am to raise awareness of, and funds for Headlight project, which aims to reduce the number of deaths by suicide in the Tees Valley, as part of a wider BRIT Challenge.



ACL ESOL staff spent a day volunteering with the Methodist Asylum Project as part of a whole college "Time4Tees" – a collaboration with other local colleges to enable staff to volunteer.

## **Action Plan Objectives 2024/25**

1. (continuing) Increase multi-faith and quiet contemplation room provision to accommodate demand and demonstrate respect and support for our college community of all faiths or none.
2. Improve attainment to eliminate achievement gaps between apprenticeship learners with a learning difficulty and disability and those without (gap of 15.1%)
3. Introduce supported internship placements throughout the college.
4. Reduce the curriculum gender split, for example, encouraging more females into STEM subjects.

## Join us working at Middlesbrough College!

Middlesbrough College is committed to the equality of opportunity for all and complies with all legal obligations and best practice when recruiting and employing staff. The College believes that staff are its most valuable asset and therefore is actively involved in several initiatives that promote and support its employees, inclusion and their wellbeing.

The College has **staff networks** to support those who share protected characteristics, including disabled staff, LGBT+ staff and BME staff. A menopause network, parents of children with SEN and network for staff who care for elderly relatives is also available. The college is signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant and has an active Veterans' network.

The College is a **Disability Confident Leader** and is grateful to its disabled staff for helping to assess how the College demonstrates commitments and identifying how we can further improve. As a Leader organisation, we mentor other organisations to achieve the status.

The College has participated in the **Better Health at Work Award** since 2009, proudly holding Maintaining Excellence – Ambassador status. The College acts as a mentor to other employers aspiring to achieve the Better Health at Work Award. The Award promotes health lifestyles and carefully considers and supports the health of all employees.

**Equality Champions** and **Health and Wellbeing Champions** are active in departments throughout the College, advocating for colleagues to improve the workplace and support initiatives that enable colleagues to be their whole and best selves.

The College works with Health Assured to provide an **Employee Assistance programme** to staff. This includes a 24-hour advice line on a range of topics that could affect an individual's stress and anxiety, as well as counselling support. Online resources and an app are also provided. This compliments existing occupational health services, through which access to health checks and drop-in counselling has been provided during 2023-24.

Periodic reports on staffing profiles are provided to the Corporate Services Committee (termly and annual reports) and College Leadership Team (monthly and termly



reports). The reports include staffing population and the diversity profile. The data is regularly benchmarked with information from the Office of National Statistics and with a local group of large employers (Teesside University, Middlesbrough Council and James Cook University Hospital). The staff population of all ethnic groups other than white British at the College is 9.3%, which is below the local population and the student population, however we are seeing a much larger increase in the % of new staff from an ethnic minority group, therefore this number is improving. The success of positive action strategies to attract more job applicants from a wider range of ethnic groups is regularly reviewed and monitored by the Equality & Diversity Strategic Committee.

Excellence in demonstrating the college value of “Respecting Others” is recognised through the staff **Star Award scheme**, where staff are recognised by receiving a certificate and have the chance of being short-listed for an award at the College’s annual celebration. Colleagues, students or visitors can nominate individual staff or students who have excelled against this, or any other college value, for a star award certificate.

#### **Staff vacancies:**

For details of current vacancies, [Click here](#).

#### **Membership of the Governing Body:**

For details of vacancies and how you can help to deliver the College’s Strategic Plan, please contact Zeta Foster ([z.foster@mbro.ac.uk](mailto:z.foster@mbro.ac.uk)) or tel. 01642 333269.

## Feedback

The Head of Student Engagement supports student ambassadors and officers, including those with a passion for Equality and Diversity.

Staff and Student networks are available and we are keen to hear from anyone who would like to join or establish a network.

Cross-college Staff and Student Council meetings are a further opportunity for issues to be raised and solutions found to advance equality and diversity.

Middlesbrough College recognises the National Education Union, UCU and Unison; frequent JCNC meetings are held to facilitate negotiation and consultation on issues relating to terms and conditions of employment.

For compliments or comments regarding equality, diversity or inclusion at Middlesbrough College, please contact:

Lin Barry

Workforce Development and Equalities Co-ordinator

Middlesbrough College

Tel: 01642 333810

[equality@mbro.ac.uk](mailto:equality@mbro.ac.uk)

The College is a third-party Hate Crime Reporting centre. Reception staff have received training so anyone can report hate crime here.

The police don't tolerate  
hate crime



Why should you?

[Report Hate Crime Here](#)

## **Appendix 1: Disability Confident Scheme Voluntary Reporting**

### **Disability Confidence: Voluntary Reporting**

The college has a range of policies to support our commitments under the Disability Confident Scheme:

- Equality Statement and Policy
- Disability Statement
- Staffing and Recruitment Policy and Guidelines
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Attendance Management Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Hybrid Working Policy
- Flexible Working Leave policy
- Workforce Development Policy

Training is provided to staff on specific and general disability awareness through our Learning Experience Platform (Thrive), some of which is mandatory. Bespoke training is offered to teams to support colleagues at the request of, and in agreement with, individuals with disabilities.

The College's staff networks meet termly, as a minimum, to amplify staff voice, contribute to improving college environment, policies and practice, and provides an opportunity to network with staff in other local organisations.

A network of Health and Wellbeing Champions and Equality Champions support teams across the College to support colleagues and offer information, advice and guidance. Both have responsibilities linked to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Examples of workplace adjustments can be found in the Disability Statement. Under the Equality Act, 2010, the duty to make reasonable adjustments in education is 'anticipatory'. This means the college must consider in advance what they need to do to make sure all disabled learners can access and participate in education and other benefits, facilities and services. Adjustments made for learners often benefit staff too.

Staff diversity data is requested at enrolment and staff are encouraged to update their information frequently through the self-service platform. 1097 staff current at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024, responded as follows to this question:

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

No	64.2%, ↓ 4.8%
Unknown (not answered)	8.7%, ↑ 5.7%
Yes – learning difficulty	2.3%, ↓ 1.8%
Yes – mental ill health	1.8%, ↓ 0.1%
Yes – physical impairment	2.9%, ↓ 0.5%
Yes – rather not say	18.7%, ↑ 17.8%

Staff profiles of colleagues comfortable to talk about disability, long-term health conditions and mental illness help to remove stigma and provide an opportunity to promote data collection. These are shared in newsletters and on the College website. A statement about confidentiality and security of information collected is provided on the self-service entry screen and it is made clear how the information will be used.

Middlesbrough College provides an employee assistance programme for staff via Health Assured, which gives confidential access to a 24/7 365 helpline for support and advice linked to health, wellbeing, legal and financial services. This includes face-to-face, telephone and online counselling support. Access to information via a website and app are also provided. The College and its staff are also supported through specialist counselling services, occupational health services and a nurse provides an occasional drop-in service for staff. Health and Wellbeing Champions, trained as Mental Health First Aiders, are also available to support colleagues.

Health and Wellbeing Champions are trained as Health Advocates as part of our Better Health at Work Award Maintaining Excellence – Ambassador status. All staff have access to a wide range of training content and activities linked to health and wellbeing topics, e.g., 665 staff viewed the College’s “Taking Wellbeing Higher” with information on services available to Middlesbrough College staff on site or via our employee assistance programme. Staff are able to access health and wellbeing information via the College learning experience platform, Thrive, which is available 24/7, 365.

Reporting to termly Safeguarding and Wellbeing and Health and Welfare Committees provides effective transparency and accountability internally; accreditation via Better Health at Work Award and Disability Confidence scheme provides effective transparency and accountability externally.

In the 2022 staff survey, staff were asked if they agreed with the following statements:

“I am aware of the mental health support available” 95% agreed.

"I am aware of the Employee Assistance Programme and benefits available through it for me/my family" 69% agreed.

"I would recommend this organisation as a great place to work" 89%

"I feel safe at work" 94%

"I receive good support from my line manager" 88%

"I get help from my colleagues if needed" 97%

"The organisation's premises are well maintained" 90%

"The work I do is interesting" 94%

"Overall, I am happy working here" 90% agreed.

#### Opportunities for Development:

This voluntary reporting framework has recently been introduced into the Disability Confident Leader validation. A review of the framework has identified the following opportunities:

Data collection questions will be reviewed, for example, asking "Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health condition (mental health and/or physical health)?"

Core and enhanced standards for the Thriving at work (Stevenson/Farmer) review of mental health is used to inform practice and further develop wellbeing in the workplace, which further advances progress made during a recent review against a balance score card to identify strengths and opportunities, working with Robertson Cooper.

A targeted leadership programme (all levels) enhances support for current and future managers so that they can confidently and effectively support employees. Managers complete First Aid for Mental Health training as part of the programme: 74 managers and Health and Wellbeing Champions across the college were trained in First Aid for Mental Health as at the end of the 23/24 academic year.

The questions in the next staff survey, looking more closely at health and wellbeing matters, will be reviewed to correspond to the recommended questions identified in the new Disability Confident Leader self-reporting framework.

Promotion of Employee Assistance Programme Services is ongoing and included in staff induction, staff newsletters and in-department via Health and Wellbeing Champions.