

# Parents' and Carers' Guide

Barking & Dagenham College

2021/ 22





# Welcome to BDC

Hello and welcome to Barking & Dagenham College (BDC). We're delighted that you are here to support your young person and find out more about what BDC can offer them. If you share our passion for success then they are in the right place and in good company. We want them to enjoy their studies, have full support and lots of opportunities to develop their skills and confidence to enable them to be successful.

We want all of our students to progress, whether it be to university, an apprenticeship, straight into work or take their career to the next level. Our number 1 goal is your young person's success and we would very much like you to work with us to ensure that at the end of the academic year, they have achieved their learning aims.

At this stage of your journey with BDC you may have a number of questions about the College and the support we offer.

# How is college different from school?

At BDC we place more emphasis on a vocational education experience and ensure that our students' time is enhanced with learning outside of the classroom. This includes work placements, visits to the industry the students hope to work in, talks from specialists in their subject area, and trips that enhance the overall learning experience.

As well as professional teaching backgrounds, our tutors have industry-relevant experience - meaning our students are taught by people who've been there, seen it and done it. By coming from an industry-specific background, tutors are able to bring their working knowledge into the classroom.

We pride ourselves on the pastoral support we offer and all the areas of support will link in, to ensure each student is given the correct guidance and support for them as individuals.



## **My young person had support at school – will they get support at college?**

Yes, the Additional Learning Support Team (ALS) offers support, advice and guidance for students with a wide range of learning needs or disabilities.

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## **What support will my child receive?**

There is a comprehensive range of monitoring and support available to students.

### **Student Learning Mentors and Personal Tutors**

Depending on the level of study, students will have either a Student Learning Mentor or a Personal Tutor. Every week they will have a one-hour group tutorial, plus regular one-to-one tutorials with their Tutor, all designed to keep them on track towards success.

### **Student Support Advisors**

There is a Student Support Advisor assigned to each curriculum area. These are trained motivators and will help students get back on track if they are struggling on their course.

### **Student Union**

These are fellow students who are outstanding in their particular subject area, and have what it takes to provide practical help with any problems with course work that they may be struggling with.



## **Wellbeing**

We offer free and impartial advice to anyone who needs it on issues including bullying, sexual health and safeguarding/prevent. Student life should be enjoyable but sometimes we encounter problems that we cannot cope with alone. It's why we have a trained Counsellor who is available for all our students.

## **Student Learning Mentors and Personal Tutor**

Depending on the level of study, students will have either a Student Learning Mentor or a Personal Tutor. Every week they will have a one-hour group tutorial, plus regular one- to-one tutorials with their Tutor, all designed to keep them on track towards success.

## **Personal Development and Enrichment activities**

Our Enrichment programme has a huge range of extra-curricular activities and events, including fundraising for charities and community projects that can enhance a CV and promote citizenship.

There is the opportunity for all students to become course representatives to speak for their area with Learner Voice – this is a great chance for students to get involved in college politics and push for positive changes that their peers want to see.

## **Will my young person's attendance at college affect our state benefit?**

No, if they are attending full-time study this should not affect your Child Benefit or Family Tax Credit, but you should inform the appropriate authorities once your child moves from school to college. If you do require proof they are at college a letter can be given, but for Council Tax exemption a letter can be requested after 4 weeks' attendance of 90% or over.

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## **How will I keep up-to-date with my young person's progress?**

We will invite you to parent/carers' events where you can meet the tutors and hear about their progress.

If you sign up for the e-Portal you will also be able to monitor their progress. See further details below under 'Tracking Students' Progress'.

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## **How do you monitor the quality of teaching?**



Every tutor is observed by a specialist cross-college team during the year and by their line manager. We also provide the opportunity for peer observations so that tutors can observe and share best practice with their colleagues. Some of our awarding bodies also monitor teaching and learning when they visit.

# What library and IT facilities do you have?

The college has a large Learning Resource Centre at the main Rush Green campus. Books, DVDs, Ebooks are available to borrow. Study spaces and computers can be booked.

We can also provide daily chrome book loans and short term chrome book loans for use at home. Specialist software is available for those with learning needs and staff can provide support if your child needs help with research or accessing information within our drop-in support provision.

## Extra activities

There will be extra activities advertised for your young person to access for Careers Employability. Please encourage them to join in.



## What catering facilities do you provide?

Most of our campuses have a cafe, refectory and/or vending machines for students to use. Hot meals and snacks are available at the Rush Green campus, and TSA and there is a café and vending machines at the Broadway. All students are eligible for FREE hot drink and toast between 8am – 8.45am.



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## What financial support is available for students?

The college is committed to doing everything we can for students to allow them to attend college free from financial worries. They provide confidential information on financial support that they may be eligible for through the college. All payments are based on their attendance at college, which must be at least 90% each month. There is also a Guaranteed Bursary which is for young students who are in the care of Social Services, Care Leavers or living alone and claim income support.

**If you require any further information please call us on: 0203 667 0050.**

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## Safety and security

Student safety and security is incredibly important to us. We employ a security team who are on-site whenever the college is open. They are all trained in safeguarding procedures.

All students and staff must wear visible ID passes when in and around the college. This ensures we know who is on site at all times. Students are also educated on safeguarding during college inductions and receive a copy of the Staying Safe leaflet.

All college staff have valid DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) certificates to provide reassurances concerning criminal histories and suitability for working with young people. They also undergo safeguarding training as part of their induction.



## Student behaviour

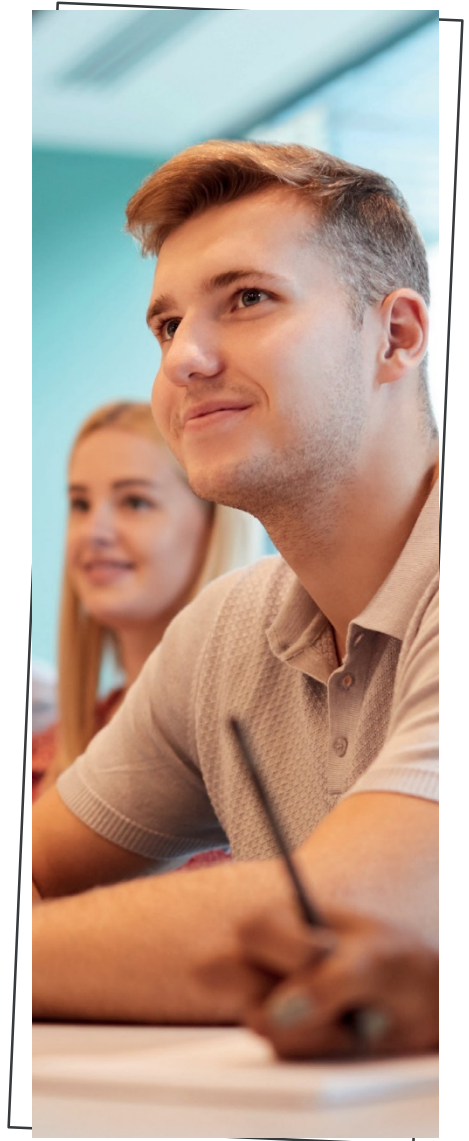
We don't accept bullying of any form within the college. We treat any cases of bullying very seriously. We operate a zero-tolerance policy on the possession or use of drugs on college premises.

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## How do I contact the Parental Involvement Manager?

We are always happy for you to contact us about any issues that you or your young person may have and we will be pleased to arrange a meeting for you to come and talk to us about any concerns and provide you with further progress information.

There is a link on the Parent/Carers' section of the website with a request form, or call 0208 090 3020 x 7384 or email: [lindsey.dacosta@bdc.ac.uk](mailto:lindsey.dacosta@bdc.ac.uk)



## How can parents/carers make a difference?

Parental support is 8 times more important in determining a student's academic success than social class. The Campaign for Learning found that parental involvement in a child's education can mean the difference between a top grade and an 'also-ran'.

One of the hardest demands on students is that of understanding the long-term importance of doing the best they can, and learning to shelve short-term fun at times in the interest of long-term benefits (not easy even for adults).

This is where parents come in. Your support, encouragement and interest can make a spectacular difference to motivation and the ability of your young person to cope with the academic and organisational demands of study programmes and the exam period.

Please see the Parent/Carer area on the website for a copy of the Maths & English Guide.

## GCSE English & Maths Exam dates (please check the relevant level for your young person).

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### English GCSE Resit (AQA)

01 November 2021 - English Language Paper 1  
03 November 2021 - English Language Paper 2

### English GCSE (AQA) June 2022

These dates will be published on our website when they are finalised.

### GCSE Maths Resit (Edexcel)

02 November 2021 - Paper 1  
04 November 2021 - Paper 2  
08 November 2021 - Paper 3

### GCSE Maths (Edexcel) June 2022

These dates will be published on our website when they are finalised.

## Functional Skills

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### Functional Skills Exam Windows

These dates will be published on our website when they are finalised.

## Celebrating success

It's important to mark the moment when a student gets good feedback, passes a course module, or successfully completes their programme or qualification. So aim to be a part of celebrating success!

## The importance of high attendance

We encourage all students to aim for 100% attendance on their courses. Please support us in this by considering course timetables and avoiding booking family holidays during term times, for example. Poor attendance can mean students can't complete their courses or don't receive full qualifications.

To score 85% in an exam is a great result, but in terms of attendance it means that the student has missed many crucial days of study – over a period of a year this can be equivalent to several weeks of college and it will ultimately affect their final result.

Make sure you know your child's timetable – when do they have Maths and English? And insist they are on that bus in plenty of time!

If there is poor weather details of whether the college is open or closed will be put on our website: [www.bdc.ac.uk](http://www.bdc.ac.uk)

## Tracking students' progress

The College uses eTrackr to track the progress of students and provide them with an Individual Learning Plan.

eTrackr is a web based application, which enables teachers to track students' performance against targets set. It also has eTutorial functionality built in, to carry out target setting, performance reviews. You can see their attendance/punctuality, progress on work (units achieved or outstanding), progress reviews, Parent/Carer reports, target grades and the level they are working towards in English and Maths.

ePortal provides parents and guardians of students with key information from within eTrackr.

**If you wish to gain access to the Parent Portal please use this link: [www.bit.ly/2kEJ46t](http://www.bit.ly/2kEJ46t) or ask a member of staff for a paper version. Scan the QR code and complete the form and details will be sent to you:**



## Parent Welcome Evening 2021

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (Rush Green)  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (Technical Skills Academy)



## Parents' & Carers' Evenings 2021/22

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 (Rush Green)  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 (Technical Skills Academy)  
Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (Rush Green)  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (Technical Skills Academy)  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (Rush Green)  
Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (Technical Skills Academy)

## College Themed Weeks 2021/22

Anti-Bullying week – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021  
Safe college week – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Employability week – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
Apprenticeships week – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022  
United values week – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022  
Healthy College Week (Disability awareness, Mental Health Awareness & Deaf Awareness)– 26<sup>th</sup> April 2022  
Next steps – 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022

We welcome any feedback and recommendations from parents and carers to help us develop and improve our college further.

Whether you have comments about course content, suggestions for student placements where you work, concerns about safety and security, or queries as to how you yourself can learn at the college – we're all ears.

The college also has a number of facilities that are open to the public. Benefit from our Learning Resource Centre, on-site gym, beauty salon, Coffee Shop and Bistro restaurant. Feel free to use them!

We've also got a wide range of FREE courses for adults. Have a look on our website for more information. You can also brush up on your English & Maths for FREE too.