

**NEWBATTLE ABBEY COLLEGE**

**British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2018-2024**

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## SECTION 2:

### 2.1 Introduction

As required by the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, the Scottish Government published its first BSL National Plan on 24 October 2017. It was developed through extensive engagement with Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. It sets out Scotland's ambition to be the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit. It includes 10 long-term goals and 70 actions the Scottish Government will take by 2020 to help make progress towards these goals. The ten long-term goals are:

- 1 Scottish Public Services – Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users\*.
- 2 Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare – The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL.
- 3 School Education – Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child's education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school.
- 4 Post School Education – BSL users\* will be able to maximise their potential at school, will be supported to transition to post-school education if they wish to do so and will receive the support they need to do well in their chosen subject(s).
- 5 Training, Work and Social Security – BSL users\* will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland's economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career.
- 6 Health, Mental Health and Wellbeing – BSL users\* will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives.
- 7 Transport – BSL users\* will have safe, fair and inclusive access to public transport and the systems that support all transport use in Scotland.
- 8 Culture and the Arts – BSL users\* will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, and an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf culture with the people of Scotland.
- 9 Justice – BSL users\* will have fair and equal access to the civil, criminal and juvenile justice systems in Scotland.
- 10 Democracy – BSL users\* will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies.

\*Wherever we refer to 'BSL users' we mean D/deaf and /or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language.

This British Sign Language (BSL) Plan, sets out the actions Newbattle Abbey College will undertake during the period 2018-2024 to achieve the same long-term goals as the national plan, where these are relevant to the work of the college.

We are committed to continued engagement with individuals and organisations and it is our intention to continue to do so in advance of our final plan being published in January 2019.

The plan is published on our website in English and BSL and comments can be sent to our lead officer.

## **2.2 Name and contact details of lead officer**

Gemma Robertson, Equalities Officer  
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### **SECTION 3:**

#### **Summary**

This British Sign Language (BSL) Plan sets out the actions Newbattle Abbey College will undertake during the period 2018-2024 to achieve the same long-term goals as the National Plan, where these are relevant to the work of the College.

This Plan also sets out our ambitions to promote and support BSL throughout our services. Progress towards the actions within this Plan, will be included without our Outcome Agreement as required by the Scottish Funding Council to ensure that inequalities experienced by students who use BSL are being addressed.

Throughout this Plan, we have highlighted where our actions meet those from the National Plan by adding the corresponding number.

## **SECTION 4:**

### **BSL Plan**

#### **4.1 Across all our services**

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

*'Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users'.*

#### **Our Actions**

##### **By 2023, we will:**

[2] Analyse existing evidence we have about students and prospective students who use BSL in our college; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure outcomes for BSL users.

[3,4] Improve information and services for students, prospective students and visitors who use BSL, including making our website more accessible to BSL users.

[5] Promote the use of the Scottish Government's national funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called 'contactSCOTLAND-BSL', which allows BSL users to contact public and third sector services and for these services to contact them.

[6] Signpost staff who work with BSL users to appropriate BSL awareness training and enable them to take up such training.

#### **4.2 Post-School Education**

We share the long-term goal for post-school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

*'BSL users will be able to maximise their potential at school, will be supported to transition to post-school education if they wish to do so, and will receive the support they need to do well in their chosen subject(s)'*

#### **Our Actions**

##### **By 2023, we will:**

[25] We will take action to ensure that students and prospective students who use BSL are properly supported. This includes:

- Providing accessible information about what BSL users can expect from the college.
- Full access to open days for prospective students who use BSL.
- Support throughout the student journey for students who use BSL (including completing application forms, interviews, applying for Disabled Students Allowance, attending Awards Ceremony).

- Support during the transition process, school – college and/or college – university
- Access to information within the college
- Fully accessible rooms within our residency

Establish baseline data on students who use BSL and use this to measure and improve outcomes for students.

[26] Take on board guidance/advice produced by the SFC and others to ensure that across the college, staff are aware of their responsibilities towards BSL users, and that students who use BSL know what to expect.

Invite continuous feedback from students/prospective students and staff who use BSL over the Coming year/18 months after adopting this Plan.

Commit to reviewing/refreshing this Plan which includes more local actions (based on that feedback) After the national progress report (due October 2020)

[27] Provide assistance (including examples) to students who use BSL to help them complete SAAS Application forms.

### **4.3 Training, Work and Social Security**

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

*‘BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career’*

#### **Our Actions**

##### **By 2023, we will**

- [35] Raise awareness of the UK Government’s ‘Access to Work’ scheme for students who use BSL towards the end of their course, so that they can benefit from the support it provides when they enter the world of work.
- Raise awareness of the UK Government’s ‘Access to Work’ scheme for those who use BSL when advertising staff vacancies.

### **4.4 Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing**

We share the long-term goal for health, mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

*'BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives'.*

## **Our Actions**

### **By 2023, we will:**

- take steps to ensure that health/mental health services (including advice and counselling services) within the college are fully accessible to students who use BSL.
- When available, publish the NHS BSL version of all screening and immunisation information (Bowel, Breast and Cervical) and seasonal flu immunisation on the college website.
- Continue to support students who use BSL to register with GP and Dental practices.

## **4.5 Culture and the Arts**

We share the long-term goals for culture and the arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

*'BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of Scotland'*

## **Our Actions**

### **By 2023, we will:**

Take action to ensure that extra-curricular/recreational activities offered within the college are accessible to students who use BSL.

## **4.6 Democracy**

We share the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

*'BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies'*

## **Our Actions**

### **By 2023, we will:**

- Take action to encourage and support BSL users to become members of the Student Representative Council
- Take steps to encourage and support BSL users can become student representatives on the College Board and sub committees.