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# Stoke on Trent College awarded the Kirklees Healthy College Standard

The staff and students are really proud to be only the second college in the country to gain the "Kirklees Healthy College Standard". The scheme was first set up as a pilot initiated from Huddersfield New College in 2001. It is now available to colleges across the country and is similar to the healthy schools standard, but with an emphasis on college issues. The status of Healthy College will benefit the College community as well as the community as a whole. Stoke on Trent has been classed as an area of deprivation with significant health inequalities; with one of the highest teenage pregnancies in Europe, a tradition of poor diet, high obesity levels and lack of physical activity, leading to high rates of coronary heart disease.

However, there have been significant improvements in people's health in the city over the past ten years with increased life expectancy and death rates, for some of the major diseases, falling. Stoke on Trent College is in a prime position to influence young people's health and that of their families and friends.

## Healthy College criteria

With the accolade of Kirklees Healthy College Standard, the college recognises the importance of investing in the health and welfare of its staff and students as well as providing a physical and social environment that is favorable to both teaching and learning. In order to gain the Healthy College status nine criteria areas had to be fulfilled, these are:

- Whole college awareness
- Active citizens
- Smoke free environment
- Healthy eating
- Environment
- Community involvement
- Student wellbeing
- Physical activity
- Staff health and wellbeing

Each area looks at improving the standard of young people's health and well

being for the present as well as for the future and also encourages staff to become healthier.

## Whole College Awareness

In the area of "Whole College Awareness", the introduction of health awareness days saw an increase in students and staff getting involved in health issues with an increase in the number of staff into physical activities and improved healthy eating in the restaurants.

In the "Active Citizens" the College has cross college opportunities including the Student Council, "Speak up Squad" and student representation on numerous committees. Another area is "Community Involvement", where the college encourages the active involvement of students, staff, governors, parents and members of the local community in the life of the College.

In the area of "Student Wellbeing" the college offers a pastoral care system with students and staff having access to free guidance and advice with mentor support and access to counsellors.

The Healthy College status has encouraged students to participate and contribute to college life with enrichment activities and training and information on drug and sexual health being readily available to both students and staff.

Caroline Highland, Director Student & External Relations said: "We are delighted to have achieved the Kirklees Healthy College Standard. A great deal of work has gone into ensuring that we meet all the requirements of the 9 criteria. It is an investment for now and the future in an area which makes a positive difference for our students and staff. Being only the second college in the country to achieve shows a real commitment and is a special achievement for us. A big thanks to everyone who has been involved."