



Nottinghamshire
Carers
Association

01773 833 833

info@nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk
www.nottinghamshirecarers.co.uk

Carer Friendly Employer Case Study

Nottinghamshire Carers Association



West Nottinghamshire College

West Nottinghamshire College is the major provider of post-16 education and training in Mansfield and Ashfield. Each year we deliver academic and vocational courses to around 7,500 students and apprentices, from pre-GCSE to university level, and across all major industry sectors.

The college embraces and encourages all those who are driven to better themselves, achieve their goals and reach new heights. Outstanding resources combined with exceptional teachers and student support means that whatever your ambition, we can help you to achieve it.

Colleagues at West Nottinghamshire College are friendly and respectful professionals who are passionate about education and lifelong learning. We seek to recruit enthusiastic individuals who demonstrate the qualities of our college values: Respect, Integrity, Collaboration, High Expectations, and Responsibility.

Employing 800 members of staff, the college's mission is to provide skills for all students, employer partners and the community to thrive, becoming a force for raising aspirations across their communities, where high-performing staff encourage students to stretch the boundaries of their potential and, in partnership with employers, develop the workforce of the future

The Challenge

The college already provided support for employees in relation to emergency leave and flexible working. However, it was generic and therefore not easily recognised by unpaid carers. We therefore looked at what more could be provided, how unpaid carers could be identified and supported at work, and how information and support could be supplied in a sustained and accessible way – whether someone was applying for a position, was newly-employed or an established employee.



The Solution

A review of existing support was carried out, from which an action plan was created. Actions have included:

- Seeking volunteers for carer champions, with those undertaking this voluntary role trained by NCA;
- Training multiple teams in carer-awareness in partnership with NCA;
- Undertaking a review of existing family leave and flexible working policies, with an emphasis on language to be clearly defined where possible with regards to unpaid carers, parent carers, and parents;
- Producing a guidance sheet detailing the support the college currently offers;
- Reviewing recruitment procedures and making changes to promote the carer-friendly status, flexible working and carer champions on the college's recruitment website;
- Including carer-friendly employer and carer champions information in face-to-face induction for all staff and mandatory training;
- Incorporating questions in the annual staff survey to find out how many staff are carers and what support would help, along with the potential impact;
- Publishing a carer-specific staff intranet page that includes information on carer champions (contact details, definition of a carer, calendar of events) and also refers to wellbeing support, employee assistance programme, and counselling service;
- Creating a Microsoft Teams carers page, managed by the carers champions, to share regular information and updates, and signpost towards resources and support;
- Using existing communications channels to communicate to all staff, including staff noticeboards, intranet, website and newsletters;
- Achieving the NCA Carer-Friendly Employer quality mark.

Feedback

"We were keen to work with Nottinghamshire Carers Association as we recognised a growing number of our staff have unpaid caring responsibilities and sometimes face challenges balancing these vital demands with their work duties and other commitments.

"We want colleagues to feel supported and be able to access help and advice, have somebody to talk to, and know where to go for information and services available both within the college and in the community. This is critical in achieving our continuous aim of ensuring the college is a great place to work by creating an environment where staff feel happy and supported, so they can do their very best for our students."

Sian Geeson
head of human resources at the college

