

# Bedford College

## Creating Deaf Space



All Deaf learners who attend **Bedford College** are supported by our Deaf Co-ordinator, Suzie Sampson. Suzie is herself Deaf and as such brings her personal experiences to the role, in which she is supported by 1, 0.8 and 9 hourly paid CSW's, all qualified at level 2 and above. The aim of the Deaf Services at Bedford College is to attract more learners and help prepare them for working/living within the hearing environment, whilst offering a supportive network to enable them to develop the necessary skills.

Suzie works closely with external partners and schools to ensure smooth transition. She delivers bespoke Deaf Awareness training to the teaching teams that students are joining, alongside cross college delivery of Deaf awareness for all staff. Suzie also supports learners whilst on programme and is available throughout the college day to support learners and staff teams with any issues.

The team have a dedicated room which is accessible to all learners and is the base for Suzie and her team whilst on site. One of the Deaf learners has trained on the college mentoring programme and provides mentor support to Deaf learners, and also runs the Deaf learner drop session (based in the Team Room). This year has seen the launch of the Bedford College Deaf Services web page and Facebook page which aims to engage with learners and promote a community feel.



[http://www.bedford.ac.uk/subjects\\_we\\_offer/supported/deaf\\_provision\\_at\\_bedford.aspx](http://www.bedford.ac.uk/subjects_we_offer/supported/deaf_provision_at_bedford.aspx)

Also this year the college, in association with the Harpur Trust, are delivering a 10 week Driving Theory course specifically for Deaf learners.

**Sam Riff** was a Deaf student at Bedford College where she studied and passed her National Diploma in Dance. Sam took part in many public performances and was a huge success. The Deaf Services Co-ordinator worked closely with the course team to raise awareness to enable them to support Sam in an appropriate manner, she also delivered training to her peer group which broke down barriers and lead to Sam enjoying both the education and social experience of being in a college. Whilst on course Sam had a notetaker throughout, without this support she would have been unable to access all areas of the provision. Sam is now a full time student at Thames Valley University studying FdA Dance.

### **Have you considered?**

- How your organisation's transition process supports d/Deaf learners?
- Developing a mentoring scheme for d/Deaf learners, delivered by d/Deaf learners, including training for mentors.
- How you promote social inclusion within your organisation for d/Deaf learners.