

Realising Potential



Who We Are & What We Do

Our vision

Our vision is for a world in which people with disabilities are able to realise their potential as equal and active citizens in control of their lives.

Our mission

To enable people with disabilities to realise their potential through personalised learning, transition & lifestyle services.

What we do

The National Star College is a specialist College and registered charity where young people with complex disabilities are equipped and empowered to shape their future and achieve success. A caring community sharing knowledge, respect and experience; a place overflowing with a passion for life and learning; and a place that reaches beyond all expectations.

Foundation Learning - Lifestyle and Choices & Learning for Living and Work

Our Foundation Learning courses provide students with personalised learning programmes that reflect their needs, allowing them to develop their potential and progress further into either further education, training, employment or a more independent life.

Vocational Learning

Work skills and vocational learning programmes at National Star College enable students to gain qualifications in specific subject areas, from Entry Level through to Level 3. Some of the vocational programmes include Creative & Performing Arts, IT, Sport & Fitness and Health & Child Care.

Partnership Programmes

National Star College runs a variety of partnership programmes, including the award-winning LIFT (Learning Independence for Travel) programme with Gloucestershire County Council which is designed to equip disabled people with the confidence and knowledge to use public transport.

Other partnership projects include short residential programmes, supported work placements and therapy based programmes.





Therapy and Medical Support

Therapy and medical support is integrated into each student's lifestyle and College programme. The services that the College provides include physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, medical and nursing teams on 24 hour care, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and behaviour management.

Enabling Technology

Always at the cutting edge of advances and developments in technology, the College provides students with the latest equipment and support to facilitate communication, mobility and most importantly independence. From eye-gaze technology to many other sorts of communication aids, the College strives to lead the way in this field.

Training

From mandatory courses in workforce development, to teacher training, to NVQs, National Star College offers programmes which are flexible and relate to the situation in which people are working. National Star College's training courses give people access to qualified trainers who, armed with the benefits of knowledge and first-hand experience, guide and support people as they work towards their chosen award.





It gives me great pleasure to report on a year which contained many significant achievements and success as well as some important decisions and milestones for the Charity.

Our main activities as an independent specialist college continued to provide specialist education and training for learners who have physical, sensory or learning disabilities with 142 residential and 25 day students during the course of the year in addition to over 250 learners who accessed other programmes and projects.

College progress was recognised during the course of the year through a number of awards and accolades including the Guardian Public Service Award for the Learning Independence for Travel (LIFT) project. Our awards are reported later on in this publication.

During the year, the Board embarked on a strategic review for the Charity and of its Governance arrangements. We continued to place high priority on the safeguarding of all those who access our provision and on our commitment to ensuring the high quality of opportunities available and the outcomes achieved.

The Chief Executive and Principal, Mrs Helen Sexton, announced her intention to leave at the end of the academic year 2009/10 after a career with the College of nearly 30 years and having held her senior position since 2000. This decision led to a review in senior management arrangements and the Board's appointment of Ms Kathryn Rudd, previously Deputy Principal, to the position of Principal together with the separation of the position of Chief Executive of the Charity. Following a recruitment process, the Board were pleased to appoint Mr David Ellis as Chief Executive with effect from August 2010.

The College's management worked with new challenges and uncertainties during the year, with core funding moving from the former Learning and Skills Council to the new Young People's Learning Agency. Student statutory funding levels received no annual increase for the third year in succession and new funding arrangements involve us in working more closely with Local Authorities and third party funding agencies. However, our successful growth in local and regional work over recent years has positioned the organisation well to respond to these new opportunities.

Following the collapse of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) capital funding programme and the subsequent withdrawal of its previously pledged 50% capital funding support, the Board concluded that it had to go ahead without Government funding and commit to the most critical elements of the next phases of the Star Appeal development. This meant that some new residential accommodation and other improvements on the site had to be deferred, but by proceeding with £6.8m of works, we will address a significant number of the pressing needs and provide a wide range of specialist resources.

Despite the development delays experienced and a challenging economic climate, the response and continued commitment of our supporters to our fundraising efforts enabled us to proceed with the development as we strive to reach the Star Appeal target of £7.7m by the end of 2011. We are extremely grateful for the support received from a wide range of individuals, companies, events, trusts and foundations.

Sharon Pearson



Our successful growth in local and regional work over recent years has positioned the organisation well



Student Achievements

Learning and Living; Working and Giving

Our students are at the heart of everything we do at National Star College. Their successes throughout the year demonstrate their desire, determination and commitment to always achieve the best that they can.

Learning

At National Star College we focus on long term goals and every one of our students has an individually designed learning programme to help them get to where they want to be.

Students focus on personal learning, living and work targets, with external accreditation where appropriate. Not only do the vast majority achieve their targets, but external verification reports indicate they more often than not exceed the standards required.

In addition, the whole College 'experience' contributes directly to helping students realise their goals and aspirations when they leave.

92.5%

of students maintained or exceeded planned education and work activities 3 months post College

100%

of full time students followed accredited learning programmes with a **100% pass rate** for full awards on main programmes

89.5%

of students achieved good or better outcomes against primary learning goals

“ Tom, former National Star College student: National Star College gave me confidence. I am now comfortable answering the phone and speaking to people I don't know very well. They also taught me to direct my own care which I am very grateful for. ”



“ Sarah, former National Star College student:
National Star College gave me the confidence to go
out and live independently. ”

Living

There's a huge emphasis on the well-being of our students and on encouraging them to 'stay healthy'. Students take full advantage of a range of high-quality therapeutic services delivered by trained staff – enabling them to manage their own physical health.

Relaxation sessions and access to counselling and behavioural support programmes give added emphasis to the need for emotional health, and the College continues to nurture effective partnerships with healthcare providers and external specialist services.

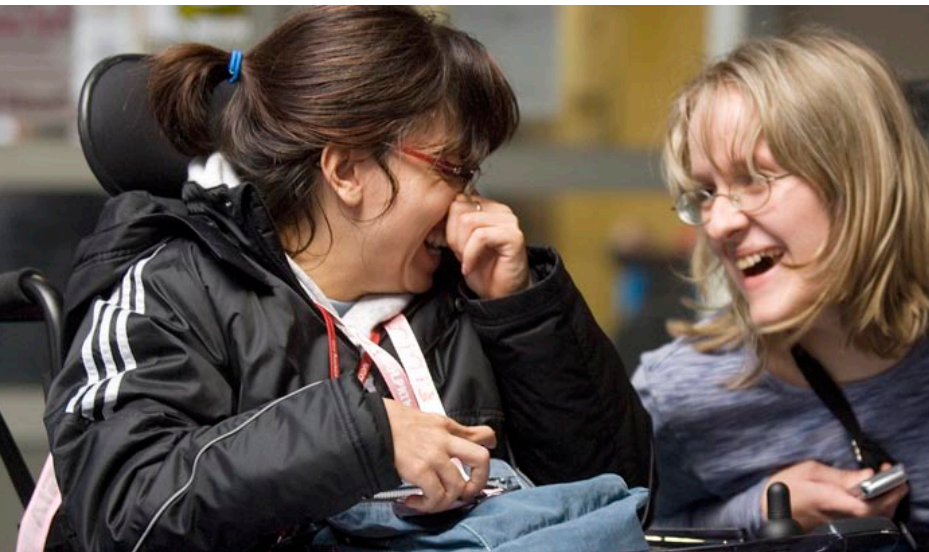
In further pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, students can take part in an excellent range of leisure activities including sport, fitness, swimming and outdoor pursuits.

92%

of students feel they learned enough to stay healthy

84%

of students had individual learning targets relating to 'be healthy' and 100% of these were achieved



Student Achievements

Learning and Living; Working and Giving

Working

The development of 'employability' skills is a clear focus of the College curriculum through on-campus and external opportunities. Realistic working environments within the College range from helping the maintenance team, to working in the College shop, bar, library or bank. In addition, IT students run a working office developing learning resources, while performing arts students tour each year with the Everyman Theatre.

Students are also involved in a range of sustainable projects – such as a College 'Green Day' and students running energy saving presentations. The College has also established allotments, and is developing a horticulture and recycling area to provide work experience.

The work-related experience is proving to be truly valuable as the College continues to seek out external opportunities for students, and to develop its enterprise learning activities. The number of College leavers moving into voluntary and paid work continues to increase.

137

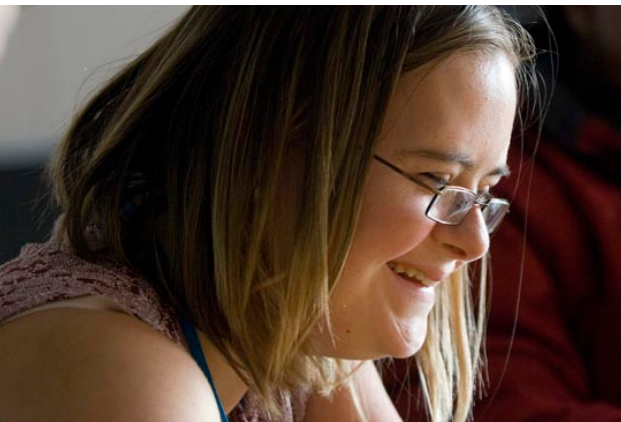
students achieved 137 external placements during the year

64%

of students had individual learning targets relating to 'achieve economic and social well being' and **94% of these were achieved**

91%

of leavers achieved their targeted work related skills



“ Harry, former National Star College student: National Star College gave me the confidence and ability to want to live in my own house in the community. I now live in Cheltenham on my own with 24 hour care support.

”

“ **Mark, former National Star College student:**
National Star College did a fantastic job in helping
me know my capabilities. ”

Giving

National Star College students' contribution to the College community is, as always, outstanding.

Volunteering, Young Enterprise activities and leisure programmes are strongly encouraged by the College. Students continue to grasp opportunities to take part in schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and to be part of an 'envoy' programme which involves interviewing staff, hosting visits, and promoting the College.

Keen to be involved, and to shape College life, one in every five students is an elected representative on a student body. A Student Parliament meets regularly with Senior Managers with input and suggestions from the wider student community.

Meanwhile, students deliver talks and training to GPs, are interviewed on television or radio, run advocacy projects for young disabled people, and actively campaign to support both the College, and other charities.

These gifts of time, energy and skill reflect our students' commitment to make a positive contribution to the College and the community which is helping them build their future.



Celebrating Our Students



"I learnt to be more independent while being at College."

Bianca Dart, Former Student

Bianca Dart came to National Star College in October 2007 to study a Level 1 OCR National qualification in Health and Social Care.

When Bianca arrived she was an extremely shy young woman who needed real encouragement to join in group discussions or to share her views with others. Bianca has a speech impairment and when anxious this can become more and more pronounced, which added to her reluctance to communicate verbally.

Bianca could use a computer but her literacy skills were relatively poor and she had difficulty with spelling, punctuation and grammar. However, with a great deal of encouragement and praise for effort and immersed into the College culture of mutual respect Bianca absolutely thrived. She took part in a German exchange programme and where she conversed with her hosts in their own language. She participated in the College's Comenius Project, travelling to Holland with other students to investigate leisure work opportunities for disabled people abroad. When the College was visited by teachers from Korea, Bianca addressed them in Korean.

Bianca became a student envoy, welcoming many guests to College, showing them the work students undertake here, and helped to plan and implement many departmental charity events, raising over £900 for various local and national charities.

In amongst all this fantastic work, Bianca achieved the OCR Certificate in Health and Social Care in record time, leaving her final term to work on preparation for study at Level 2.

Bianca faced many challenges during her time at National Star College, but she smiled throughout, never felt sorry for herself and never stopped trying to be the best she could be; when she left National Star College in 2010 she was awarded the Karan Legg trophy for Tenacity following a ballot by her peers and College staff.

National Star College laid the foundations for Bianca to move on to mainstream education at Filton College, Bristol, where she is studying Health and Social Care at Level 2. Since being at Filton College Bianca has achieved a distinction grade for her first assignment, which is a fabulous achievement for Bianca, as well as a huge compliment to the many different National Star College teams who supported and encouraged this young woman to develop her potential and live life to the full.

National Star College laid the foundations for Bianca to move on to mainstream education

Celebrating Our Students

Dayle Walker, Current Student

Dayle Walker is a sport student in his third and final year at the College. Dayle has cerebral palsy.

On joining College, Dayle settled in well and worked hard to complete his first year studying Level 1 Sport, beginning to develop his leadership skills.

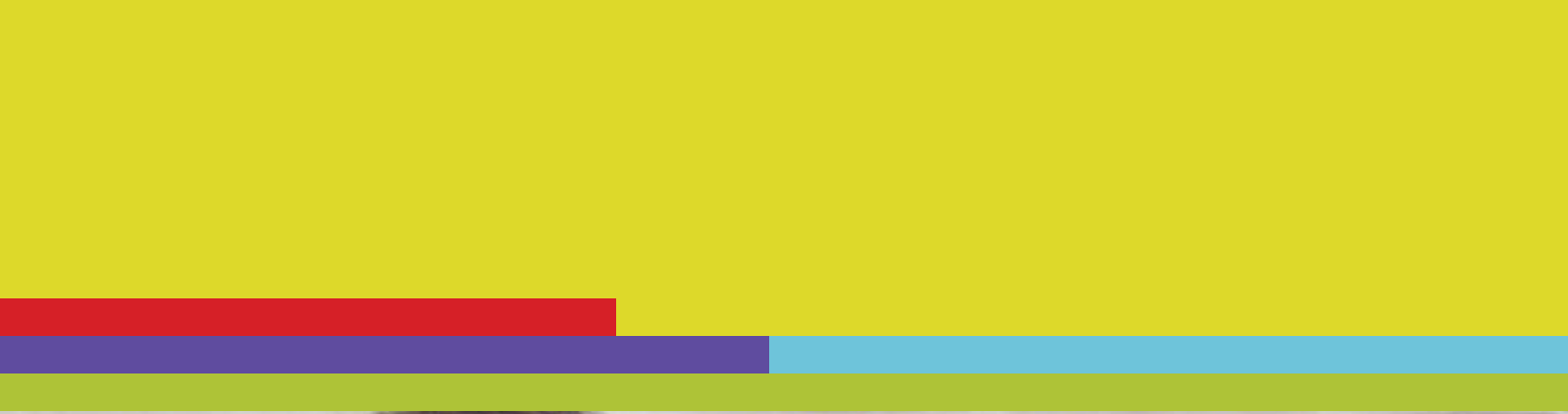
Dayle immersed himself in College life outside of the classroom, and has had many successes as a result of his love for sport and also his enthusiasm to support other students whilst at College. These have included competing in the College Boccia team and representing the College at the South West Athletics Championships in 2008.

Dayle's achievements and personal development really started to flourish in his second year at College. He became a more confident young man in his life and surroundings and went on to complete his Level 1 Sport Diploma and also achieve an umpiring qualification in Table Tennis. As part of his sports coaching, Dayle planned and led activities with maturity and confidence at a local school, often filling in for peers when they were absent. The initiative and motivation that Dayle has shown has really been the key to his success at the College.

Now in his final year, Dayle is studying Level 2 Certificate in Sport. When he leaves in July 2011 Dayle plans to go on to complete the Level 2 Diploma at either a College in Gloucestershire or at a college in his home town.

Dayle has contributed a huge amount to College life in three years and has also got an enormous amount back. He has developed into a confident young man with clear goals for the future to continue to be a success and achieve his ambitions.





“I am now able to be confident in different environments, meeting new people and coaching sports. The College has helped me develop into a young man who can move on and fulfil my aspirations.”



Celebrating Our Students

Amy Slade, Former Student

Hello my name is Amy, I'm 20 years old with learning difficulties and a visual impairment. Since leaving National Star College I have become an employee of Starbucks. For me, being in the world of work has been a really positive experience and came about after completing a confidence boosting work experience placement whilst in my final year at National Star College.

It all started after my support staff at the College recognised that I was apprehensive about leaving, so it was thought work experience would be a great opportunity to ease me into the upcoming changes! I was scared to begin with, but my placement certainly opened the door to learning new skills – I couldn't believe how quickly it went and how much I learnt! From then I knew that I wanted to stay in paid employment, so I was delighted when I was asked to stay on! Suddenly, I had a new, clearer plan for life after college – working in Starbucks and completing an NVQ in Catering. I couldn't wait to get started!

In the past year I have completed my training but more importantly I have become a 'real extension of the team', gained specialist knowledge, trained new staff and regularly get involved in team planning. I feel confident to say that I have become more than a Barista, but a Partner of the company.

I am so happy with what I have achieved with the support and guidance of National Star College, and now I am looking to gain more skills so that I can take control of my life further- I certainly haven't looked back!

“In the past year I have completed my training but more importantly I have become a ‘real extension of the team’.”



Jonny Cooper, Current Student

Jonny Cooper is a sport student at the National Star College, studying for a BTEC in Sport Recreation at Level 2. Jonny has an acquired brain injury following an accident in 2006. Now in his third year at College, Jonny is currently living in one of the College's independence flats.

What is your favourite thing about being at College?

My favourite thing about being at College is the actual work (I know a lot of people will think I am just saying this!) and being able to use the gym here at College to keep fit.

I have made some good friends on my course as well. I learn a lot from them, and have things in common with them as we share our College course as a personal choice.

How have you benefitted from being at National Star College?

I have benefitted academically and physically at National Star College. I enjoy learning new things on my course and I also really enjoy using gym.

I put all of my learning and hard work down to my teachers. Staff here are brilliant. I work hard at College because I don't want to live in supported housing, I want a job and to be able to live independently in the future.

How do you find living in the independence flat?

Living in the independence flat has helped me dramatically. I like time to be on my own, to have personal space and most importantly not have to have support with everything. I can do my own washing and ironing and I cook for myself every evening in the flat.



I get the train home to visit my parents most weekends and as part of living in the flat on my own I organise this myself, booking my own taxi and sorting out my own train journey home.

What do you want to do when you leave National Star College?

When I leave College I want to become a Personal Trainer. I am going to go to college in Bristol to do a Certificate in Advanced Personal Training. I want to carry on living independently, near to the college in Bristol.

Jonny's Mum and Dad...

"Having finished rehabilitation at the Brain Injury Unit in Surrey, our son needed to learn independence and be educated to pursue the rest of his life, to obtain a future. We were privileged to have Jonathan accepted as a student at the Star College.

It wasn't straightforward, but much help was given and our son has now settled, become independent and is studying for his future. Yes we now think of a future, something four years ago we would never have dared think of."

"Well done our son, well done the Star College."

College Achievements

Some of the Charity's achievements are hard to miss, with the new building work standing out to all those who visit the National Star College.

Guardian Public Service Award

The National Star College, in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, won a prestigious Guardian Public Service Award for its 'LIFT' Project. The Awards are the leading celebration of excellence among organisations commissioning or providing services. LIFT (Learning Independence for Travel) was the vision of the National Star College and Gloucestershire County Council to create and deliver the best countywide independent travel training and awareness programme.

Green Gown Award

Staff and students at the National Star College celebrated after winning a Green Gown Award for its College-wide approach to sustainability. The Green Gown Awards were established six years ago to find the UK's most sustainable universities and colleges.

National Star College were winners of the Colleges and Smaller Institutions category for the submission "Climate Change is not just about Polar Bears – Our Whole College Approach to Sustainability". The National Star College's commitment to sustainability encompasses all parts of College life and initiatives range from sustainability champions in all departments to carbon reduction and energy saving programmes which encourage students and staff to focus on sustainability at College, home and in the wider community.

BECTA Technology Exemplar

National Star College was one of sixteen education and skills providers from across England to be granted Technology Exemplar Network status for a second consecutive year. The College was chosen as an exemplar because of its innovative work in developing enabling technology. Working together with learners who have learning difficulties and or disabilities the College has used mobile technology, gaming devices and a range of access technology in order to promote greater autonomy in the way students learn, live and work.





Investors in People

The importance that we place on the involvement, training and development of our staff was again recognised this year through the Investors in People (IIP) Award, where the College successfully attained silver status.

Star Appeal Development

Following the decision in December 2009 to progress with the major capital development for the main campus at Ullenwood, the building work started in March 2010.

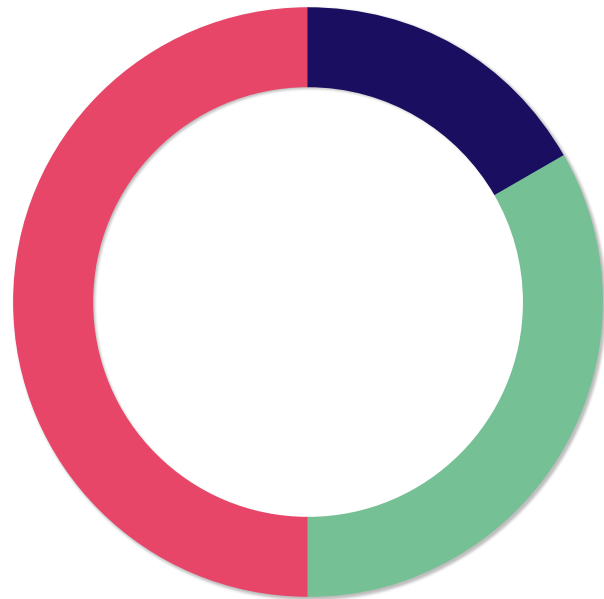
The works, which are due for completion in spring 2011, will provide a new Therapies Centre with hydrotherapy, multi-sensory suites, physiotherapy and specialist training; new creative arts facilities; a learning technology centre; a new front entrance building to encompass real work skills learning environments in a training kitchen, cafe, shop and office; ten bedrooms of student residential accommodation, including four independent living studios and a new Performing Arts centre for dance and drama.

How is the National Star College funded?

Income through fundraising and other activities The National Star College raises funds for vital facilities and equipment through charitable donations from individuals, trusts, companies and other organisations. This income enables the National Star College to provide disabled people with the facilities which are essential for them to be able to transform their lives during their time at the College.

Statutory income towards operating costs Our staff and operating costs are funded via statutory sources including Local Authorities and third party funding agencies.

Grants paying for specific projects A variety of funders support the National Star College's groundbreaking programme of projects for disabled learners.



Statutory income towards operating costs £12,891,627
 Income through fundraising and other activities £2,234,016
 Grant income for specific projects £873,579

How is the College's income spent?

Living at College The National Star College provides young disabled people with residential placements where, supported by specialist staff, they are able to unlock their potential and build skills for independent living. Residences are staffed 24 hours a day to assist with personal care and development, and staff also support leisure activities.

Delivering education, work based learning and life skills training The National Star College offers flexible learning programmes which match our students' individual requirements,

and every student is supported by a personal learning mentor. Our work with young disabled people focuses on developing the skills they need to take control of their lives and prepare themselves for adulthood.

Developing College Facilities and purchasing equipment The Charity has undertaken a major development programme, funded by the Star Appeal, to provide vital new facilities which will greatly enhance the Charity's life transforming work with disabled people. The new therapies centre, creative and

How is the College's income spent? Cont'd

performing arts facilities, work related learning centre and life skills residential facilities are due for completion in spring 2011. The College also provides state-of-the-art equipment and technology which helps to develop mobility, health, communication and independence.

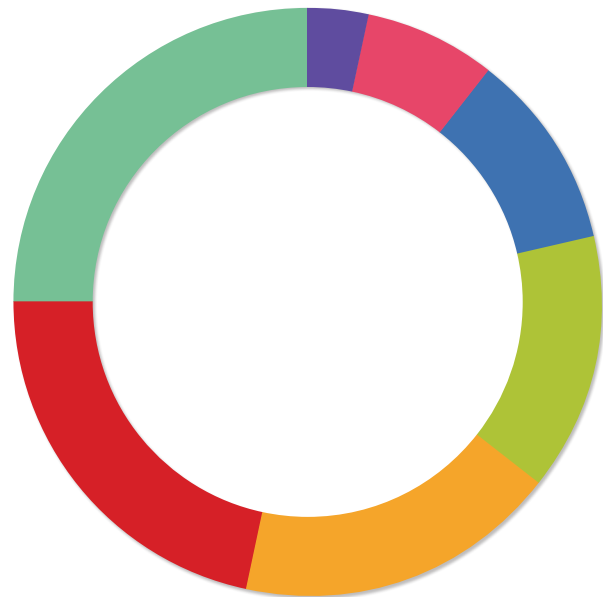
Essential services and support behind College activities

A network of teams support the National Star College's operational activities by providing services such as catering and transport for our students, and maintaining essential facilities.

Health and wellbeing of students A healthy lifestyle is very important to our students, who participate in sports, swimming and other fitness activities, and benefit from a range of therapies which are integrated into their lifestyle and College programme. Specialist medical staff ensure the wellbeing of students at all times.

Groundbreaking projects and programmes The National Star College runs a series of programmes for young and adult learners, including the award winning LIFT which equips disabled people with the confidence and knowledge to use public transport. Other partnership projects include short residential programmes, supported work placements and therapy based programmes.

Cost of fundraising The National Star College raises funds to purchase essential equipment, develop facilities and run projects and programmes which would not otherwise be funded.



Living at College	36.2%	■
Delivering education, work based learning and life skills training	17.8%	■
Developing College facilities and purchasing equipment	15.9%	■
Essential services and support behind College activities	13.1%	■
Health and wellbeing of students	10.6%	■
Groundbreaking projects and programmes	4.4%	■
Cost of fundraising	2%	■

Vice Presidents

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 Dr S Burrows
 Mr Sam Butler FRICS
 Mrs A L Cadbury OBE, JP, DL
 Mr Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP
 Sir John Craven
 Mrs A Denham-Davis MBE
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 The Hon M W Vestey
 Major The Hon Andrew Wigram MVO
 Mr James Wilson OBE
 Mr Keith I B Yeaman

Chairman

Mr Shaun Parsons

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 Mr Peter Cottingham
 Professor Barry Dent OBE
 Mr Anthony McClaran (until Sept 2009)
 Mr Tony Saunders (until June 2010)
 Mr Stephen Scott-Smith
 Mr Paul Styles
 Mr Jim Tierney

Co-opted members of Resources and Education & Student Welfare Committees

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 Mrs Eugenia Hassett
 Mrs Deborah Hutton JP
 Mr David Pierce
 Ms Kate Robertson (until Nov 2009)
 Mrs Mary Saunders OBE
 Mrs Margaret Sheather
 Mrs Alison Williams

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 The Reed Foundation
 The Worshipful Company of Grocers

Thank you to the following organisations for their support

Adult Education in Gloucestershire,
 Gloucestershire County Council
 Gloucestershire Connexions
 Gloucestershire Prospects
 Aim Higher
 LSIS
 British Council

We are extremely grateful for the support of all the individuals, charitable trusts and organisations not listed above but who have devoted time, gifts and resources to supporting the National Star College.

To find out more about the National Star College, please contact us:

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