
Queen Elizabeth's School

ANNUAL EQUALITIES REPORT

Introduction

Queen Elizabeth's School believes that excellence is enabled through recognising the value of every individual. The School aims to create an environment that respects the diversity of staff and pupils from all different backgrounds and allows them to achieve their full potential, to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the School.

The School also works to ensure equality of opportunity, supporting those with additional needs and affirming a meritocratic approach to admissions, recruitment and reward.

The School takes seriously its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, complying with its requirements to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This report sets out some of the steps taken by the School over the past year in support of the Equality Act 2010 and provides an update with regards to the fulfilment of the School's own specific equality objectives, as confirmed by the Governing Body in February 2019.

To gain a fuller understanding of the School's approach and procedures with regards to equalities, this report should be read in conjunction with, among other documents, the School's Equal Opportunities Policy, SEND Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Bullying Policy, as well as procedures for admissions, recruitment, performance management, and disciplinary matters.

Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty

- Senior leaders and staff began the formal implementation of *Building on Distinction*, the School Development Plan for 2021-25. The Plan, approved by governors in the previous academic year, redefined what it means to be 'confident, able and responsible' in the context of the 2020s, following consultation with staff, parents and pupils.
 - Aspects of a 'confident' Elizabethan include being "secure in his own identity... principled, always open to learn, and prepared to challenge himself as well as others". "We encourage boys to discover, develop and express a resilient identity that is based on their own values, interests and personality." An education at QE seeks to "instil in boys a ready willingness to embrace challenge and change and to consider viewpoints different from their own."
 - An 'able' Elizabethan will achieve free-thinking scholarship in part by "rigorously challenging their thinking and by stimulating their genuine academic interests". We aim to "nurture broad, analytical thinkers who are ready to seize the opportunity presented by their rapidly changing world to shape new solutions to its new problems" and "celebrate diverse talents and aptitudes."

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- “A responsible Elizabethan is kind and considerate. Wise and compassionate, he seeks to change things for the better, both in his own community and in society at large. We help boys to consider and understand the consequences of their words and actions, encouraging them to listen carefully to other people’s perspectives and to treat others as they would like to be treated, and thus to play their part in fostering a happy, inclusive community.”
- A number of the developmental priorities established by the Plan, also support the School’s work to meet its duties under the Equality Act. These include that the School will:
 - Provide bespoke support to assist learning and remove barriers to progression.
 - Create opportunities for pupils to experience a broad range of social and cultural activities and to facilitate greater participation in a wide variety of academic enrichment activities.
 - Celebrate the diverse skills, talents, and achievements of pupils in all year groups, with the goal of recognising what is unique about each individual.
 - Emphasise the importance of civic engagement and of cultivating positive relationships within the community.
- The final section of the Plan sets out a series of enabling areas that the School is committed to. These include:
 - Open-mindedness, tolerance and kindness – “We will promote and live out the values which reflect our Elizabethan traditions and the best of the modern world. While looking beyond the immediate and the reactive, we will engage with different perspectives in areas such as race and discrimination as we seek to pursue higher, shared human values. We will foster a safe environment in which boys can share their experiences with those from diverse backgrounds, and will encourage thoughtful and open conversation about societal issues. By thus broadening pupils’ horizons, we will nurture an atmosphere of friendship and friendliness in which we both learn from our diversity and recognise commonality.”
 - Excellence and advancement on merit – “Through careful attention to staff recruitment and pupil admissions, we will gather the best talent, irrespective of background.”
- Year 1 implementation outcomes supported the delivery of these priorities and enablers:
 - A whole-staff audit assessed strengths and perceived gaps in knowledge for supporting students with SEND. This resulted in the identification of particular SEND types where more focused support could be provided, with the emphasis on pedagogy as well as mental health/pastoral support. Strategy meetings took place with the LA autism support team, as well as other providers. The main areas identified were: speech and language; autism, and executive functioning. The National College was selected to provide on-demand training materials.
 - Senior staff read a curated selection of recent academic research as they considered ways to develop a more diverse and inclusive curriculum. Departments such as PRS, English, History and Geography have conducted their own research and/or training. These are the first steps in a long-term project. A mission statement was written setting out the School’s aims and objectives and serving as a crucial starting point for establishing an action plan.
 - Social enterprise group Bold Voices led training on the pastoral INSET day to help staff deal with challenging discussions in the fast-changing areas of racial, gender and sexuality-based inequalities. Further training took place in Heads of Year (HoY) and tutor team meetings.
 - The Personal Development Training (PDT) programme was updated in the light of issues highlighted through the #MeToo and Everyone’s Invited movements. Furthermore, we

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identified key messages regarding gender equality that should permeate our pastoral curriculum through meetings with a steering group of staff and girls from The Henrietta Barnett School (HBS). HoY have collaborated with several schools, but especially HBS, to help QE pupils learn more about others and their perspectives.

- Several resources were added to the pastoral area of eQE, including videos produced by peer mentors. In addition to publicising the availability of the existing School counsellor widely, we took on a second counsellor and appointed a Health and Well-Being Officer.
- Related policies were updated to promote equality and diversity. For example:
 - The SEND Policy was updated following a review conducted with reference to the SEND Code of Practice. The revisions reflect the support arrangements the School now utilises, such as the counselling service with Rephael House. The policy re-emphasises the commitment to ensuring that pupils with SEND fulfil their considerable potential and are fully active members of the School community. All pupils are taught in mainstream classes, with support being targeted and personalised based on an individual's needs. The document sets out roles and responsibilities, the processes for identifying SEND and the support measures in place to help pupils access the curriculum, and how the School work in partnership with the family and external agencies, as appropriate, to achieve strong outcomes for each pupil.
 - The Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy was reviewed in light of the considerable pressures placed upon some pupil's mental health by challenges arising from the pandemic. The evidence base was updated to reflect the continuation, at a national level, of a general increase in mental health problems being experienced by young people. The policy sets out how the School seeks to promote good mental health and wellbeing, employing a variety of strategies, and what support is available to those who do experience difficulties.
 - A new Dignity at Work Policy was introduced to broaden coverage of matters relating to equalities and staff wellbeing. This will promote good professional behaviour and allow for concerns relating to unwelcome conduct to be raised and resolved. It sits closely with the Code of Conduct, but gives scope to deal with issues that would not immediately meet the threshold for more formal disciplinary interventions. It also very purposefully includes reference to situations in which staff are being bullied or harassed by pupils or members of the public, acknowledging that such circumstances can arise and that there is a duty of care to staff as well as to pupils.
- The Accessibility Plan was updated, setting out what actions are being taken to support the accessibility of the curriculum, the wider QE experience and the site for those with barriers and additional needs. In addition to the ongoing strategies contained within the plan, progress has been made on the implementation by:
 - Delivering level access to the new Music School building, as well as ensuring that this new facility is fully accessible (wide doors; no facilities on first floor that are not also available on the ground floor);
 - Significant progress with a programme to replace and improve lighting across the site to aid those with visual impairment;
 - Completion of a programme to add visibility strips to staircases;
 - Increasing the visibility of those with disabilities within the curriculum, especially Personal Development Time, e.g. assemblies and workshops addressing, and positively

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- representing, those with physical disabilities, SEN conditions such as ASD and ADHD, and neurodiversity;
- Appointment of consultants to complete a master-planning exercise for further developments to the campus;
 - Designs drawn up for adaptations to the Main Building to deliver The Robert Dudley Studio (with disabled access), as well as an additional entry/exit point to provide further access and to reduce congestion in the corridors.
- Procedures relating to the circumstances under which candidates can use word processors in public examinations have also been reviewed, to ensure both that pupils with disabilities are able to fulfil their potential and that the integrity of the exam system is upheld.
 - Additional support was put in place for internal assessments, in line with pupils' inclusion reports, so that these formed fair and reliable evidence to monitor performance ahead of GCSE and A-Level examinations.
 - Reasonable adjustments were implemented with respect to the entrance examination for candidates with SEND to support the meritocratic process, including one-to-one and small group invigilation, with staff apprised of individual needs.
 - Departments across the School ran additional lessons and enrichment activities for Black History Month and Pride Month.
 - The assembly programme featured a broad range of speakers chosen to link to themes in the PDT programme, including those tackling racial, gender and sexuality-based inequalities. Among many others, these included Soma Sara, founder of Everyone's Invited, and representatives of the JAN Trust, speaking about extremism. In addition, senior staff contributed to assemblies on topics such as forming positive relationships, neurodiversity and recognising the rights of others.
 - The PDT curriculum was supported by input from external speakers and organisations, for example:
 - RAP Project - Digital Natives (Y7/Y8 talk) ("The RAP project which promotes awareness for teenagers negotiating social media and its influence on attitudes and expectations. We openly discuss mutual respect, mutual consent and try to marry hard facts with humour and experience")
 - RAP Project - Digital Natives (Y7/Y8 parent talk)
 - Years 8 and 9 joined an online presentation from Just Like Us – and LGBT+ charity for young people.
 - Years 7 and 8 had an assembly focused on gender inequality for International Women's Day.
 - Years 7 and 8 had an assembly focused on Loneliness for Mental Health Awareness Week.
 - Year 9 welcomed Anantha Anilkumar (OE) to discuss how to overcome unexpected obstacles in life.
 - Years 9-11 received Active Bystander workshops
 - Year 9 and Year 10 welcomed Shaun Dellenty to speak about LGBT+ bullying and being inclusive.
 - Year 10 undertook the JAN Trust sessions on extremism/radicalisation and FGM, which are currently a compulsory part of the PDT schedule.
 - Year 10 welcomed OE Nick Millet to speak about his work with working in NGOs, the Development sector and refugees.
 - Years 12 and 13 received Active Bystander workshops
 - Year 12 and 13 received a talk from Soma Sara, founder of Everyone's Invited

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- Year 12 and 13 received a talk from Gifty Enright, author and speaker on International Women's Day
- The Perspective forum was maintained, led by senior prefects (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team), and supported by staff, to promote and facilitate open dialogue about global and societal issues such as racism. The dedicated section on eQE was used to host materials and discussion threads. The range of issues has expanded covering such matters as Pride and the Gender & Sexual Minorities community, and the oppression of religious minorities in other parts of the world.
- A new LGBTQE Society was formed and promoted to pupils across the year groups.
- The School renewed and enlarged existing partnerships, with activities including large-scale Year 10 debating with HBS and academic symposia with North London College School. A new Sixth Form charity and community action project, QE Together, was established with Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School. This fosters collaborative working relationships between the boys and young women.
- The peer mentoring system, which covers both academic and pastoral issues, saw older boys support their younger peers with a range of concerns, including some that touched upon anxieties connected to identity and equality. Peer mentors have been trained in how to conduct mentoring meetings. Training for online meetings using MS Teams had been in place during Covid-19.
- The School counsellor, a service delivered in partnership with local charity Rephael House, maintained her increased hours at the School, enabling her to engage with more pupils, and run a drop-in clinic at break and lunchtimes to help triage those feeling in need of support. The caseload increased and is now supported by a second highly-qualified counsellor, who is supporting the School pro-bono.
- Work was undertaken to further the support provided by the Old Elizabethan community. Building on the Black Mentoring Programme involving Black OEs and Black senior students, trialled earlier in the academic year, a wider programme was launched via a dedicated QE Connect group, pairing OE mentors with students in Years 12 & 13.

Our equality objectives

In this section work towards meeting the School's five established equality objectives will be highlighted. Progress towards achieving these aims will be regularly monitored and reported at least annually. The following objectives were set by the Governing Body in February 2019.

1. Reduce any attainment gap between pupils of different ethnicities in English (and other essay-writing subjects), relating to around half of all pupils not having English as their first language.

About 92% of the current School pupil population are from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds and around 45% are advanced bilingual learners, where English is not their first language. Attainment at Key Stage 4 is incredibly high, with 82% of GCSEs taken in 2021-22 awarded 9 or 8 (the equivalent of an A* under the old system). The spread in results remains wider in English than in many other subjects (notably Maths and the Sciences), with fewer pupils obtaining the highest grade 9 and more gaining grade 7 or below than in most other subjects. However, the proportion gaining the top grade 9 in English Language rose to 46% (from 30% in 2021 under TAGs) and grade 9s in English Literature also increased to 40% (up from 28% in 2021). The percentage of grades at 6 and below remained fairly consistent, with English Language at 8% (compared to 6.5% in 2012) and English Literature at 6% (compared to 8% in 2021). Whilst awaiting official data, internal projections show that the average grade

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achieved in each of the two English subjects increased to be above 8. It must be stated that the method for determining grades differed from one year to the next, with public exams sat by all pupils in 2022. It should be noted, though, that data from previous years indicates that pupils with English as an additional language achieved and progressed to an equal or greater degree than those with English as a first language. Work has nevertheless been undertaken to provide additional support in order to ensure equal opportunity for high attainment.

- An extra English lesson per week was introduced in 2019-20, allowing increased curricular time for the development of advanced literacy and written communication skills. Specifically, in Year 11 all pupils have an extra 35 minute period (6 periods rather than 5 periods) and in Year 10 pupils in sets 7-8 English have an additional double lesson (so 7 periods compared to 5 periods for those in sets 1-6);
- There was a focus in 2021–2022 on embedding the 'disciplinary-literacy approach' – which recognises that many literacy skills and approaches are subject-specific. Informed by recent academic research, each department incorporated strategies for improving reading skills into schemes of work and lessons.
- In addition, The Queen's Library encouraged reading by issuing class sets of books for boys to read and discuss together in form-time, and organising Year 10 form-time library visits.
- Learning walks have been conducted by members of the Senior Leadership Team to look at the use of written and spoken language in lessons. Heads of Subject and the Head of English will be continuing with these looking at: the use of correct terminology; the use of full sentences when communicating in class; the nature of reading in class, given that most reading is now done for homework so that lessons are more discursive with the subject expert; any literacy misconceptions which exist in certain subjects.
- Additional intervention classes for pupils in Year 11 not on track to make the expected progress or attainment level in English have been maintained, supported by the work of subject clinics available to pupils of all ages across all subjects; and
- The wider process to ensure a diverse and inclusive curriculum has considered representation in fiction books and creative writing tasks, as well as non-fiction resources.

2. Reduce the attainment gap between those pupils in receipt of pupil premium and their cohort at large at GCSE.

Disadvantaged pupils also perform very highly at the School. Analysis of destinations for those pupil premium pupils leaving the School at the end of Year 13 in 2022 shows the following universities and courses:

Universities: Exeter; London School of Economics, Oxford, Warwick

Courses: Engineering, Experimental Psychology, Management, Medicine

Three students have opted to take a gap year. In two of those cases, this was because they outperformed their expectations and now aim to re-apply through UCAS to target other universities.

Between them, they gained: 8 A*, 10 A, 2 B, and a C. This equated to 38% of grades being achieved at A* and 86% at A*-A. These figures are very high in the national context, though a little behind the wider

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cohort at Queen Elizabeth's (71% and 92% respectively). The sample size is not statistically significant, however, with many candidates performing in line with their peers.

Within the cohort of 12 pupils sitting their GCSEs, three secured straight 9s in all of their full-course subjects and nine secured an average grade score of over 8. Provisional data released by the DfE shows a Progress 8 score for the disadvantaged cohort of 0.85. This Progress 8 score is well above the national average. It is a little lower than the full cohort (0.94), but the difference is not statistically significant given the sample size. Attainment 8 for the disadvantaged cohort was 83.1 (out of a possible 90). This is very high nationally, where the average is 48.7. Nine of the cohort have transitioned into the School's Sixth Form for 2022-23.

Fuller information on how those pupils who qualify for pupil premium are supported is set out in the annual Pupil Premium report, but strategies have included:

- Reducing the size of form groups in the Upper School, to enable more targeted and bespoke support;
- The provision of one-to-one, small group, and peer-to-peer tutoring, to give additional support to those at risk of falling behind in relation to their peers;
- Engaging specialist support, including a professional counselling service and educational psychologists, for those pupils with social or emotional problems likely to impede their progress;
- Bursaries to enable disadvantaged pupils to participate in the full range of extra-curricular enrichment opportunities, including online work experience placements, providing equal opportunity to accrue their benefit; and
- Enhanced use of digital technology to support learning and parental communication.

3. Reduce further the incidence of the use of pejorative language by pupils in relation to race, gender and sexual orientation.

The number of cases involving racist, sexist or homophobic language remain low; however, continued effort is required to eliminate such instances. This year:

- The Personal Development Time programme, including the Relationships & Sex Education curriculum, has sought to increase understanding and foster good relations, as outlined in other sections of this report;
- The use of language has been specifically considered as part of the PDT programme, supported by special assemblies from visiting speakers such as Shaun Dellenty (on LGBTQ+ bullying and inclusivity) and Gifty Enright (on gender-based stereotyping);
- Discussions have been held at staff and pupil forums following the emergence of the Everyone's Invited movement to address issues of sexual harassment and violence within society, with the use of language, including online, part of this wider problem. Soma Sara, Founder of Everyone's Invited, spoke as part of the senior lecture programme;
- The Perspective forum, established following the international response to the killing of George Floyd, continued to hold discussions and post materials about a range of issues including racism and racist and discriminatory language.
- There were two suspensions given to pupils in 2021-22 as a sanction for racial abuse. One involved racially offensive language and the other for drawing racially offensive symbols.

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4. Further foster tolerance, understanding and good relations between those in the School community with a protected characteristic and those without through the curriculum and pastoral support system.

Matters of equality are considered across the scope of the academic and pastoral curricular, notably through the Personal Development Time programme. The PDT curriculum has undergone a process of review, consultation and revision, so that:

- In Year 7 themes include diversity and respect, and bullying (including cyber-bullying, racism and homophobia);
- In Year 8 work includes the dangers of stereotyping, issues around consent, identifying biases, and being a role model to others;
- In Year 9 equality is studied alongside identity and sexuality, healthy relationships, and pornography and respect;
- In Year 10 there is additional focus on prejudice and tolerance, press freedoms, sexual consent and pressure, and an assembly on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM);
- In the Upper School (Years 11-13) there is further exploration of personal identity, modern relationships, respectful relationships, marriage and the law, body image, successful mental wellbeing, stereotyping and the media, religion and ethics, and equality in the UK.

5. Increase pupil consultation and leadership on equalities issues, enabling them to better promote equality, diversity and inclusion among their peers.

In a diverse community it is important that pupils have the opportunity to be heard on issues of equality, but also for them to take responsibility for their own conduct and the example they set to their peers. Whether through the prefect system, vertical tutoring, leadership of extra-curricular activities, or just in their visibility to others, pupils can have a significant impact upon the attitudes and experiences of others. In support of this objective:

- A student-led Diversity Society was established to provide a regular opportunity for boys to debate, discuss and to self-educate on a range of equalities issues.
- A new LGBTQE Society has been formed and promoted to pupils, for example at the Clubs and Societies Fair, with special activities such as quizzes (open to all) taking place during LGBT History Month and Pride month.
- A team of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion prefects were appointed, tasked with promoting these values throughout the School and supporting awareness raising around issues such as race, mental health, sexuality and gender identity. The ambassadors have maintained a dedicated equalities noticeboard, helped co-ordinate celebration of occasions such as International Women's Day, Pride, and Black History month, and delivered resources to other students on the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion to them.
- Senior students have continued to develop 'Perspective', the eQE based forum to facilitate open dialogue among pupils around important societal issues, not least racism and injustice. The resources, covering a range of topics (including the gender and sexual minorities community), are designed to help pupils further educate themselves about these issues, building upon the work they do in PDT and their academic subjects, and to create a space for them to ask questions and

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express their views. The forum is open for all pupils and members of staff to post and get involved in the conversations.

Review:

This report on equalities at Queen Elizabeth's School was prepared in October 2022 and progress will be reviewed by the Governing Body again in November 2023, in line with a requirement for annual reporting.