
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 set by the Governing Body in February 2023.

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 continue to be guided by the principles and objectives set out in *Building on Distinction*, the School Development Plan for 2021-25. The Plan, approved by governors, 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

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world to shape new solutions to its new problems” and “celebrate diverse talents and aptitudes.”

- “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 3 implementation outcomes supported the delivery of these priorities and enablers:
 - During a whole-staff staff training day in support of the workstream to ensure a broad, diverse and inclusive curriculum, educator and author [Jeffrey Boakye](#) looked at identity and at curriculum blind spots. Identity themes considered during the year include masculinity, race, religion, socio-economic background and academic ability.
 - Academic departments have continued the process of auditing their curricula and making carefully considered changes to align with the [mission statement](#) for a diverse and inclusive curriculum published in January 2023.
 - Under the guidance of the Head of Digital Teaching and Learning and the Deputy Head (Academic), staff began to use the Microsoft Co-pilot tool to support the researching and development of more inclusive curriculum materials.

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- A review of the School's Personal Development Time (PDT) curriculum was begun, gathering input from staff and pupils. This is to ensure that the topics and sequencing are best suited to the needs of students preparing for life in contemporary society and that the curriculum can flex to emerging risks and opportunities.
- Learning walks focusing on support for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) were conducted to monitor provision and share best practice, with a new pro forma introduced to aid this process.
- Micah King, Head of Year 13/PDT lead, undertook two days' training to be a Mental Health First Aider.
- A weekly wellbeing check has been introduced for pupils in Years 7-10, using Smoothwall Pulse, following a successful trial in summer 2024. This enables staff to gain an overview as to how individual pupils and cohorts are feeling, while giving pupils an opportunity to ask for help if they need it. The data gathered over time will be useful in analysing whether there are differing patterns of wellbeing between pupils with protected characteristics and those without.
- Smoothwall monitoring software plays an important role in keeping pupils safe online, when on the School network or using a school-manged device (including when at home). Enhanced measures have been introduced as part of the roll-out of 1:1 IT devices. The alerts provided to safeguarding staff when pupils search for something that causes concern can be used not only to intervene in these individual cases, but to identify, challenge and address patterns at a cohort or school-level. For example, the use of racist or sexist language will be easier to detect, with pastoral strategies able to refocus on any such issues that present themselves. The system also allows staff to identify students who may be struggling emotionally, if their online conduct gives rise to a safeguarding or wellbeing concern.
- 1:1 devices help deliver equality of access to hardware and software, with all pupils benefiting from online resources, collaboration spaces and activities that build their digital skills. The technology can also support access arrangements connected with physical disabilities, long-term illness or SEN, with tools facilitating adaptation or differentiation.
- A new partnership with Atom Learning is providing primary school age children from disadvantaged backgrounds (those eligible for pupil premium funding) with access to e-learning resources to build their skills, confidence and also their familiarity with the sorts of questions that may arise in 11+ exams. This can be accessed via the School's website and is available to boys and girls aged 7-11.
- An entrepreneurship festival was run in partnership with LSE Generate and North London Collegiate School (NLCS) with a focus on celebrating women in business. Part of the programme involved entrepreneurs from the UK and overseas pitching for real investment from LSE. The winning project was Uman 4 Uman, a social enterprise that focuses on addressing the issue of period poverty among young girls in Africa and provides them with reusable and sustainable sanitary pads. All of the businesses had to explain how they are contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals to be eligible. The festival was part of the International Women's Day celebrations, the theme of which was 'Investing in women: Accelerate progress'.
- To be consistent with existing terminology used in governing body committees, the gender-neutral term 'Chair of Governors' was adopted to make clear that leadership roles are equally open to women.

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- Related policies were updated to promote equality and diversity. For example:
 - The Safeguarding Policy and ICT Policy were reviewed in the context of the roll-out of managed 1:1 IT devices, and the enhanced monitoring and filtering software in place to keep users safe online. The monitoring system generates alerts and data that inform strategic interventions and enhancements to the pastoral curriculum.
 - The Charging and Remissions Policy was updated, ensuring that the criteria for receiving financial support to participate in the wider life of the School is made clear - with remissions allowing for greater inclusion in the QE Flourish co-curricular programme.
- 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:
 - Working with NVB architects to formulate a new estates masterplan that will provide strategic direction to enhancements to the campus over the next couple of decades. Key projects within the plan include larger, more accessible indoor sports facilities and changing rooms (which may eventually be of local community benefit too, via lettings) and ground floor science laboratories.
 - The construction of The Robert Dudley Studio (for drama and spoken word activities) which has level access from the Main Building.
 - The roll-out of managed 1:1 devices to four year groups (as of September 2024), with ongoing staff training and development. The devices, chosen and centrally managed by the School, will provide equality of access to suitable hardware and software for academic and enrichment activities, whilst allowing for enhanced differentiation and support for those with additional needs inside and outside the classroom.
 - Implementing technology to support pupils with significant hearing problems to access teaching and learning in the classroom (e.g. radio microphone devices).
- 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 and external assessments, in line with pupils' inclusion reports, so that these formed fair and reliable evidence to monitor performance.
- 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.
- EDI Ambassadors continued to deliver events through QE Flourish. The whole School celebrated Black History Month, participating in art and essay competitions, and student-led House assemblies. Similarly, QE marked LGBT History Month through: boys wearing rainbow ribbons on blazers; a

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screening of *Bohemian Rhapsody*; and a themed quiz. A similar programme followed for Pride Month, with EDI Ambassadors additionally delivering discussion sessions to every form class. For the first time, QE formally marked South Asian Heritage Month.

- The School Play, rehearsed during 2023-24 and performed in October 2024, was *Lions and Tigers* by Tanika Gupta. The play, focusing on the struggle for Indian independence, celebrated Indian culture, history and heritage, building awareness of historical and political issues among performers and the audiences.
- Politically neutral resources were created in October 2023, and subsequently, regarding the conflict in the Middle East – helping pupils to build understanding of the issues and discuss developments in a secure and structured environment. This major conflict has not led to divisions within the school community.
- The assembly programme featured a broad range external speakers chosen to link to themes in the PDT programme, including those tackling racial, gender and sexuality-based inequalities. To name just a few examples, with assemblies for:
 - Year 7 on racism-<https://www.theariseproject.org.uk/>
 - Year 8 on looking after yourself and your wellbeing
 - Year 8 on herd mentality and dealing with racism
 - Year 9 on World Mental Health Day
 - Year 10 on sexual violence & consent from the Metropolitan Police
 - Year 10 on extremism and FGM by LB Barnet
 - Year 10 on Holocaust Memorial Day
 - Year 10 on misogyny and gender-based violence by the organisation Brook
 - Year 10 on HIV awareness by the Terrance Higgins Trust
 - Year 10 on healthy relationships by Tender
 - Year 11 on identity and sexuality by Just Like Us
 - Year 11 on National Citizen Service and Contributing to Society
 - Year 12 on importance of organ/blood/bone marrow donation by Anthony Nolan Trust
 - Years 10-12 on LGBTQ+ inclusivity, homophobia and transphobia by Just Like Us
 - Year 13 on Black History Month
 - Year 13 on efforts in Gaza and Southern Israel by the British Red Cross
- A pilot project on 'Multiple Masculinities' was undertaken with Years 8 and 10, led by trained older students. This included the presentation of positive role models to emphasise strong values.
- The LGBTQE Society was expanded and promoted to pupils across the year groups, with open events such as quizzes held to bring people together. Events were open to both those identifying as part of the LGBTQ community and those who do not identify as LGBTQ but wish to show their support.
- The School renewed and further developed existing partnerships with girls' schools, with activities including large-scale Year 10 debating with HBS and academic symposia with North London College School. Activities also took place, for the first time, with Notting Hill & Ealing High School. QE Together, the partnership with QE Girls' School continued to expand beyond the Sixth Form and into academic as well as community action matters, with girls visiting the School for Art and Design

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workshops and the TEDx conference. 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. 47 pupils benefited from the support of a peer mentor in 2023-24.
- The School counsellor, a service delivered in partnership with local charity Rephael House, maintained increased hours at the School, enabling engagement with 25 pupils and a drop-in clinic at break and lunchtimes to help triage those feeling in need of support. The caseload is now supported by a second highly qualified counsellor, who is supporting the School pro-bono.

Our equality objectives

In this section work towards meeting the School's four 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 2023.

- 1. Increase the representation of people with protected characteristics in the curriculum, to ensure it is diverse and inclusive.**

Following a period of consultation among staff and the wider Elizabethan community, the School developed and published a new vision statement for a diverse and inclusive curriculum. The vision statement sets out the School's ambitions and the principles against which the curriculum will be audited. This is part of a longer-term project. The statement is phase one – articulating the vision. Phase two is auditing the current offer across academic departments and the pastoral curriculum; and phase three is enacting change. Elements of phases two and three have already taken place, but this process needs to be replicated across the School and then repeated regularly as this is not a programme of work which can ever be 'done'.

[The vision statement can be read in full using this link.](#)

Recent examples of change already undertaken to increase diversity and inclusion include, but are not limited to:

- The texts used in English lessons are now more diverse. Year 7 are using *Diverse Shorts* – a publication designed to promote critical thinking that features a diverse range of authors. In addition, across Years 7–9, the choice of texts now includes many women among a range of voices that reflect a wider society. For example, Year 7 study *The Tempress* by Tanika Gupta. Keen to show that 'literary heritage' extends well beyond the 19th century, and well beyond our shores, a new unit for Year 8 looking at *One Thousand and One Nights* (also commonly referred to as *Arabian Nights*) has been developed and trialled, using the expertise in Arabic of a member

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of the department. At GCSE, the department is seeking opportunities in the non-fiction and fiction unseen reading papers to use textual extracts that are drawn from a range of perspectives.

- To date, more than 100 high-quality titles have been purchased to add to the collection in The Queen's Library, which is now more ethnically diverse, features LGBTQ+ characters, and covers themes that help pupils explore gender identity and mental health issues.
- Units studied in Years 7–9 History have been modified to introduce more diversity by looking at new topics. For example, the Year 7 course begins with a study of Ancient African Kingdoms, introducing pupils to themes of government and society, religion and culture, identity and technology. In Year 8, the Indian Rebellion of 1857 is now included, ahead of the unit on Civil Rights. At GCSE level, a new option unit, entitled Migration, provides a thematic study that will help pupils gain an understanding of how the identity of the people of Britain has been shaped by their interaction with the wider world. In addition, the department has introduced a project spanning all year groups to help them understand the importance of women throughout history.
- A new scheme of work on the topic of migration has also been planned by the Geography department, with a new project for Year 8 supported by the national Museum of Migration. Pupils participate in workshops and are asked to interview family members on their own migration stories and journeys. The project ends with a Geospatial analysis of their journeys (using ArcGIS) and pupils map all the journeys made by their interviewees.
- In Science, resources have been updated to feature the contributions made by women in scientific investigation and discovery. This included engaging with industry professionals. For example, a Year 10 trip to Imperial College to hear Prof Gill Reid, and a talk to Years 7&8 from Yasmin Ali on chemical engineering.

2. Enhance accessibility to educational and enrichment opportunities for those with disabilities through the use of technology.

The roll-out of 1:1 pupil IT devices (laptop/tablet) has provided increased opportunities to utilise supportive technology within the classroom, aiding differentiation where needed. The Head of Digital Teaching and Learning has now joined the School's Senior Leadership Team, working alongside other senior leaders and Heads of Subject to co-ordinate the development of educational resources and methodologies. The SENCo has been heavily involved the design, planning and implementation of the programme, recognising the scope for technology to aid those with additional needs.

While the centrally managed devices aim to provide equal access to apps and resources for all pupils, the School's IT team can tailor permissions and apps to specific devices. This can enable discreet differentiation within the classroom.

The chosen Lenovo devices have a touchscreen, keyboard and stylus, making them flexible to be worked with in different ways, such as by pupils with conditions that make it harder for them to either type or handwrite their work.

Separately a system of using radio microphones to support pupils with significant hearing problems has been implemented in line with these pupil's inclusion plans.

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3. 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 is undergoing a process of review, consultation and revision. At present:

- In Year 7 themes include diversity and respect, friendships, and bullying (including cyber-bullying, racism and homophobia);
- In Year 8 work includes identifying biases and the dangers of stereotyping, community and personal identity, 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 free speech;
- 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.

Mr Micah King (Head of Year 13) was appointed to an additional role to lead on the review and development of the School's pastoral curriculum.

In addition to the academic and pastoral curriculum, additional activities are organised to celebrate diversity and inclusion – often linked to national or international events. For example, competitions to design posters and PC screensavers celebrating prominent members of the LGBTQ+ community during Pride month, or black inventors during Black History Month.

4. Embed and formalise pupil voice and leadership on equalities issues, enabling them to 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:

- EDI Ambassadors' Club is open to pupils in Years 9-12 and is engaging pupils in active promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) at QE. It covers a wide range of issues and seeks to create a team culture of mutual support.
- The School recruited 27 pupils from Years 9-11 as Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Ambassadors to support the two assigned Vice-Captains with their leadership of this important aspect of School life. This is embedding pupil leadership lower down the School and enabling for succession planning. The ambassadors are split into sub-teams working on different areas of provision: events; pastoral resources; and the PERSPECTIVE eQE forum. Ambassadors visited form groups (all of Year 7-10) during Pride month to deliver PDT lessons on topics such as:

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- British LGBT and South Asian Heritage Culture
 - Intersectionality
 - Coming out and Allyship
 - Sexual Orientation and Identity
 - What is Pride?
- The PERSPECTIVE pages on eQE are predominantly pupil-led and curate a range of resources to help pupils educate themselves on a range of issues relating to equality and diversity. The section has a forum for discussion, allowing pupils and staff to post materials that might be of interest or generate healthy debate. There are areas on race and racial discrimination; gender and sexual minorities; colonialism; antisemitism; as well as particular political conflicts such as Israel-Palestine, the war in Yemen, and the Hong Kong protests. There is also exploration of issues like climate change, animal rights and veganism, which have an ethical and, sometimes, religious dimension.
 - The LGBTQE Society was expanded 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.
 - Student leadership of faith-based societies e.g. Jewish Society, Hindu Society and Sikh Society (to name but a few) is well-established.
 - Pupils have been involved in marking occasions like Black History Month, delivering themed presentations in House Assemblies.
 - EDI matters receive highly visible support from the School Captain and other senior prefects throughout the course of the year.
 - Peer mentors help provide targeted support to younger students who may need assistance, with large numbers being willing to undergo the necessary training and to serve the school community in this way.

Review:

This report on equalities at Queen Elizabeth's School was prepared in October 2024 and progress will be reviewed by the Governing Body again in November 2025, in line with a requirement for annual reporting.