



Walthamstow School for Girls

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee"

Policy Document

Equalities Statement and Objectives 2020 – 21

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I. AIMS

Our school is committed to equality. This is embedded in our ethos, culture and aims as well as being encapsulated in our motto, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee”.

The school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty (PSED) by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The protected characteristics, as identified in The Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

For the avoidance of doubt, “gender reassignment” is not synonymous with “gender identity” in the definitions outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Walthamstow School for Girls is committed to achieving the highest standards of effort, behaviour and commitment so that all students realise their full potential. As a school we inspire a love of learning and a genuine respect for all members of our multi-cultural, multi-faith community. Our commitment to a quality education for all girls acknowledges our special responsibility in the education of girls so that they can play a full part in society.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This document meets the requirements under the following legislation:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#), which introduced the public sector equality duty and protects people from discrimination
- [The Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) Regulations 2011](#), which require schools to publish information to demonstrate how they are complying with the public sector equality duty and to publish equality objectives.

This document is also based on Department for Education (DfE) guidance: [The Equality Act 2010 and schools](#).

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body will:

- ensure that the equality information and objectives as set out in this statement are published and communicated throughout the school, including to staff, students, parents and carers;
- ensure that the published equality information is updated at least every year, and that the objectives are reviewed and updated at least every four years; and

- delegate responsibility for monitoring the achievement of the objectives on a day-to-day basis to the headteacher.

The equality link governor is Sami Urrehman. They will:

- meet with the designated member of staff for equality at least annually, and other relevant staff members, to discuss any issues and how these are being addressed;
- ensure they're familiar with all relevant legislation and the contents of this document;
- attend appropriate equality and diversity training; and
- report back to the full governing body regarding any issues.

The headteacher will:

- promote knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students; and
- monitor success/progress in achieving the objectives and report back to governors.

The designated member of staff for equality will:

- support the headteacher in promoting knowledge and understanding of the equality objectives amongst staff and students;
- meet with the equality link governor if necessary to raise and discuss any issues; and
- support the headteacher in identifying any staff training needs and deliver training as necessary.

All school staff are expected to have regard to this document and to work to achieve the objectives as set out in section 8.

4. ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION

The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions.

Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.

Staff and governors are regularly reminded of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, for example during meetings. Where this has been discussed during a meeting it is recorded in the meeting minutes.

New staff receive training on the Equality Act as part of their induction, and all staff receive refresher training at the start of the academic year as well as during the year when appropriate.

All incidents between students which have any discriminatory dimension to them are logged and recorded. Staff work with the students to develop their mutual understanding and to resolve issues.

The school has a designated member of staff for monitoring equality issues, and an equality link governor. They regularly liaise regarding any issues and make senior leaders and governors aware of these as appropriate. The Headteacher's termly report to the governing body includes a section on racist and homophobic incidents involving students and will be broadened to include staff.

5. ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have (e.g. students with disabilities, or gay students who are being subjected to homophobic bullying);
- taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic (e.g. enabling Muslim students to pray at prescribed times); and

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- encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities (e.g. encouraging all students to be involved in the full range of school societies).

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- publish attainment data each academic year showing how students with different characteristics are performing;
- analyse the above data to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information;
- make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups (e.g. declines in incidents of homophobic or transphobic bullying); and
- publish further data about any issues associated with particular protected characteristics, identifying any issues which could affect our own students.

6. FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it by:

- **Promoting tolerance, friendship and understanding of a range of religions and cultures through different aspects of our curriculum**

This includes: teaching in MFL, Religious Education, Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education; activities in other curriculum areas, for example, in English, students will be introduced to literature from a range of cultures; and emotionally intelligent approaches to working within a diverse community during, for example, discussions, plenaries, meetings and sharing of ideas.

- **Holding assemblies dealing with relevant issues**

Assemblies led by middle and senior leaders are frequently related to contemporary and international issues linked to equality, as well as demonstrating our GREEN values. Students are encouraged to take a lead in such assemblies, and we also invite external speakers to contribute where appropriate and following due diligence.

- **Working with our local community**

This includes inviting leaders of local faith groups to speak at assemblies, and organising school trips and activities based around the local community.

- **Encouraging and implementing initiatives to deal with tensions between different groups of students within the school**

For example, all students are encouraged to participate in the school's activities, such as sports clubs and arts productions. We also work with parents to promote knowledge and understanding of different cultures.

We encourage self-regulation and leadership through our ethos and systems. Strong, trusting relationships between students and staff enable students to raise concerns and gain support in initiating their approaches to reducing and resolving tensions.

- **We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach.**

This is ongoing and includes our alumni. We ensure due diligence is undertaken and that all links with people and groups are with those who adhere to the legislative guidance.

7. EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN DECISION-MAKING

The school ensures it has due regard to equality considerations whenever significant decisions are made.

For example:

- The school always considers the impact of significant decisions on particular groups. For example, when the annual school calendar is planned, including parent/carer evenings and other events, full consideration is given to religious holidays and festivals observed by our community of staff, students and families.
- When a school trip or activity is being planned, the school considers whether the trip:
 - Cuts across any religious holidays
 - Is accessible to students with disabilities

The school keeps a written record (known as an Equality Impact Assessment) to show we have actively considered our equality duties and asked ourselves relevant questions. This is recorded at the same time as the risk assessment when planning school trips and activities. The record is completed by the member of staff organising the activity and is stored electronically with the completed risk assessment.

- Curriculum and syllabus decisions always consider diversity and ensure a breadth of knowledge and skills counter a singular perspective.

8. STUDENT INFORMATION RELATED TO PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Number of students on roll at the school: 884

Information on students by protected characteristics

As defined by the Equality Act: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex, and sexual orientation.

Disability

The Equality Act defines disability as when a person has a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.' There are a number of students with disabilities. The types of disability include:

- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment

| Year Group | Number on Roll | % Free School Meals | % Minority Ethnic Group | % First Language not English | % Special Educational Needs | Children Looked After |
|------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 7 | 176 | 17.6% | 77.8% | 15.9% | 11.9% | 1* |
| 8 | 179 | 17.3% | 82.7% | 21.8% | 9.5% | 1* |
| 9 | 177 | 17.5% | 78.0% | 23.2% | 6.8% | 1* |
| 10 | 175 | 17.7% | 80.6% | 23.4% | 14.9% | 1* |
| 11 | 177 | 17.5% | 84.7% | 27.7% | 22.0% | 1* |

* Value between 0-5 students

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Looked After Students (LAS)

Regular meetings take place with carers and social workers, as well as with other agencies when necessary. All students are overseen by the Designated Teacher to track progress and to ensure that everything possible is in place to maximise learning and achievement.

Religion and Belief

| | Year 7 | Year 8 | Year 9 | Year 10 | Year 11 | Total | % |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|-------|--------|
| Buddhist | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 6 | 0.68% |
| Christian | 44 | 46 | 43 | 39 | 31 | 203 | 22.97% |
| Hindu | 1* | 6 | 1* | 6 | 1* | 23 | 2.60% |
| Jewish | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 0.34% |
| Muslim | 86 | 84 | 86 | 96 | 92 | 444 | 50.23% |
| No Religion | 37 | 37 | 40 | 26 | 39 | 179 | 20.25% |
| Other Religion | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 10 | 1.13% |
| Refused | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 0.23% |
| Sikh | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 0.11% |
| {None} | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 1* | 13 | 1.47% |

Pupil Premium

The school receives additional funding for students eligible for free school meals and for looked after students. Information on the use of the Student Premium is available on our website.

9. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1

To ensure all students from disadvantaged backgrounds progress significantly above national standards for disadvantaged children

Why we have chosen this objective:

It is central to our ethos and moral purpose that all students, regardless of their background, believe in their potential and are equipped with qualifications which will enable them to access future learning opportunities and employment success. Social equality and mobility is attainable through education.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- use our progress data intelligently to identify and monitor groups and individuals;
- maintain awareness and accountability for these students through: line management; meeting times; staff CPD sessions; and sharing of best practice; and
- consider appropriate support strategies which may include: mentoring; support/catch up sessions; IT solutions.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

Teaching staff use information on their classes effectively to “know” their students.

Data will be reviewed in the Summer Term.

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OBJECTIVE 2

To ensure that students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds progress significantly above national standards for students from those groups.

Why we have chosen this objective:

We are committed to equality and recognize the need to ensure that our aims are aligned to outcomes.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

- use our progress data intelligently to identify and monitor groups and individuals;
- maintain awareness and accountability for these students through: line management; meeting times; staff CPD sessions; and sharing of best practice; and
- consider appropriate support strategies which may include: mentoring; support/catch up sessions; IT solutions.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

Data will be reviewed in the Summer Term.

OBJECTIVE 3

Develop relationships with the community we serve to enable their expertise and experience to inform our decision making and the lived educational experience of our students.

Why we have chosen this objective:

To ensure that all members of the school community and their families feel valued, heard and included. The BLM responses in 2020 stimulated much discussion within the whole school community (students, staff and families) and provided a catalyst for inclusive engagement appertaining to race.

Topical discourse and decision making related to gender identity, sexuality and Relationship and Sexual Education have stimulated the need to engage with all stakeholders on these sensitive issues.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Develop working groups within school among staff and students, and to include families. Findings from these forums will help navigate and shape future strategy, systems, approaches and decision-making.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

In the Spring Term 2021 a staff group was created to focus on race and diversity. The forum is currently building trust and dialogue in order to listen and consider short, medium and longer term actions that can be undertaken to address the issues and concerns raised. The group is currently called BAME but may revise that. A parallel group for allies of the main group will be initiated in the Summer Term 2021.

The consultation on the Relationship and Sex Education policy will provide further engagement with our community stakeholders including staff and student families.

OBJECTIVE 4

To ensure all students are engaged with wider school life and enrichment opportunities, and to address any obstacles to engagement that may be rooted in issues related to the equalities mandate.

Why we have chosen this objective:

We are committed to the self-actualisation, academic success and wider engagement of all students. In order to ensure this commitment is realized, we understand the importance of ensuring it is continually promoted, monitored and improved. Additionally, it is vital that all opportunities are inclusive and accessible to all, and that any obstacles to that engagement are identified and addressed.

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To achieve this objective we plan to:

Analyse internal and external data sources, including qualitative and quantitative intelligence. Analyses will inform practice and strategy.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

To be added

OBJECTIVE 5

Train all members of staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection on equal opportunities and non-discrimination at beginning of the next academic year. Training evaluation data will show that 100% of those attending have a good understanding of the legal requirements.

Why we have chosen this objective:

To ensure that the equalities agenda is fully understood and taken on board by all adults working within our learning community. Greater appreciation of the agenda will enable self-reflection, organizational reflection and ongoing commitment to ensure equality is manifest in the lived experience of our students.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

Plan for training in September 2021 for all staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

Training is planned.

OBJECTIVE 6

To encourage applications from people with disabilities and to ensure we demonstrate commitment to all employees in meeting their needs whilst working within our school.

Why we have chosen this objective:

To outwardly communicate our inclusive ethos to prospective and existing employees, as well as the wider community. To encourage applications from people with disabilities and demonstrate our commitment to ensuring existing employees feel supported to contribute and thrive within our school. We wish to help address the under-representation of people with disabilities in the school workforce.

To achieve this objective we plan to:

To apply to the Government “Disability Confident” scheme at Level 1, “committed”.

To incorporate the “Disability Confident” (formerly known as the Two Ticks Scheme) badge into our job advertisements, website and letterhead.

Progress we are making towards this objective:

In March 2021 we are evaluating the scheme and intending to apply.

10. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The governing body and headteacher will review the equality information we publish, (described in sections 4-9 above), at least every year and update it as appropriate.

This document will be reviewed by the governing body and headteacher at least every four years.

This document will be approved by the governing body.

11. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

It is our aim to ensure equalities are considered centrally in our strategic leadership and policy documentation. In future, all policies will be consciously considered and constructively critiqued with the equalities lens.

This document directly links to the following policies:

- Accessibility Plan
- Anti Bullying Policy
- British Values Statement
- Careers Education and Guidance Policy
- CPD Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- School Support Staff Appraisals
- SEND Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy

12. REFERENCES

The Equality Act 2010 and Schools May 2014

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

Equality Act 2010: Part 11 Chapter 1, legislation

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/part/11/chapter/1>

Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Guidance for Schools in England (last revised July 2014)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance-schools-england>