

Equality Information and Objectives Statement: Single Equality Scheme

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1 **Statement**

Batley Girls' High School is a multi-cultural, multi-racial community of around 1,500 people, both adults and students. We believe that everyone in the school is of equal value and should have equal opportunities in school, the community and in life.

Many people in our society are discriminated against and treated as if they are worth less than others because of their race, religion or language; because of their gender or sexuality; because of their class or because of a disability. This is not acceptable in our school.

People are individuals and therefore different. They have different needs and different contributions to make to the life of our school and of the community. The staff and governors for their part strive to give unconditional trust and ask of students that they endeavour to be honest and give respect to other people and their property. There may be times when the relationship between a member of staff and a student breaks down. In such cases, the school will give all the support it can to the student concerned and to her parents, even though redress to exclusion may be necessary.

Equal opportunities is not about treating everybody the same. It is about meeting people's individual needs and appreciating their individual strengths and gifts. We are all different and should all be equally valued. Everything that follows in this statement is to help everyone involved make Batley Girls' High School a real equal opportunities and inclusive school.

2 **Aims**

Our main aim is to offer an education appropriate to each individual student's needs, ensuring no discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or religious beliefs.

We aim to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for all our students, and the opportunity to reach levels of attainment appropriate to their ability. We regard all our students as being of equal value and to ensure that the needs of all students are identified and met, and that they are able to achieve their full potential, helping to raise standards across the school.

We aim to ensure that active encouragement is given to all students in order to enable them to develop fully talents and personal skills for co-operative interaction and academic excellence. No one person has the right to deny another person his or her educational opportunity.

We aim to ensure that everyone at the school, (staff, students, parents, carers, contractors and visitors) is afforded the basic rights of freedom and access to opportunity, including freedom from all forms of harassment or bullying.

Where contractors are working on-site, measures will be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that their employees operate according to the school's equal opportunities policies.

We aim to challenge in a positive way any form of prejudice, racism or sexism, whether overt or covert, which contradicts the school's single equality scheme, (including disability, gender and racial equality policies and codes of conduct). This means adopting a consistent and unambiguous

stand, from which we strive to overcome prejudice and ensure equality of opportunity for all, thus protecting the rights and liberties of every individual.

We aim to create and retain a workforce that is valued for its diverse contributions and represents different perspectives, ethnic backgrounds, experience and skills. To achieve this, the school will maintain strong community/parental links and governors will give support to the school and all its stakeholders, to ensure an effective educational delivery.

3 **Guidelines**

Any provisions related to equal opportunities and racial equality must set out clearly its aims and objectives:

- Human dignity (students develop a sense of worth of self and others, irrespective of social, cultural, ethnic, linguistic or faith background).
- Justice and fairness (students value genuinely democratic processes and principles and are willing to take action on this).
- Commitment to equality (students recognise the principle of equality as the underpinning of relationships between individuals, groups and societies).
- Appreciation of diversity (students develop an open-minded approach to other cultures and social groups and are willing to learn from them).

From this, the following key guidelines emerge:

- All students should be encouraged to value their own cultural heritage and the culture and lifestyles of others, and to show respect for self and others while at the same time finding common ground to talk to one another and valuing living together in a community.
- Every member of staff needs to accept responsibility for establishing a reasonable climate for debate and extending opportunities for controversial discussion. They must address widely held misconceptions to avoid the risk of students with limited experience arriving at consensus views of doubtful validity.
- The provision of genuine equality of opportunity must be inherent in the education the school offers. The curriculum opportunities must be open to all. The school must challenge any gender stereotyping, which leads to constraints on the development of students' abilities and aspirations and should include the opportunity to study multicultural issues as an intrinsic part of all programmes and teaching.
- The school should clearly demonstrate the unacceptability of attitudes, incidents, taunts or remarks that give offence, intimidate, devalue another's view or opinion, or undermine another's self-esteem.

More specifically, this means the following codes of practice for governors and staff, students, parents/carers and visitors and contract staff.

4 **Governors and staff**

Staff will treat each other and all students with respect.

Staff will examine the ideas and images in books and other resources and will challenge negative images and give all students positive images.

Policies on displays, notices, meals, uniform, etc in the school will reflect its multi-racial population.

Attendance at in-service training courses on equal opportunities will be encouraged. Staff will make every effort to understand the origins and nature of racism, disability, sexism and other forms of prejudice to recognise their own prejudice where it exists.

The school values the fact that many students are bi/multi lingual and will encourage the teaching and/or use of community languages.

Positive links will be developed with the homes of students and communities from which our students come.

Preventing and dealing with discriminatory behaviour, abuse, bullying and intimidation is the responsibility of us all. Batley Girls' High School will support victims of such incidents, on or off the premises.

Appointment and promotion of staff will be made and monitored in accordance with the school's equal opportunities policy for staff selection, appointment and promotion. The governing body will monitor the balance at all levels of gender and ethnicity as well as membership of the governing body.

5 **Students**

All students are valued for themselves and can expect to have their culture and language treated positively and with respect.

Students will be given the opportunity in the classroom to discuss and to identify and understand racism, sexism, disability and other forms of prejudice.

Students will be able to contribute to the development of equal opportunities and other school policies through the year through school councils.

If students feel they have been abused racially or bullied they should report the matter immediately to their form tutor or pastoral manager. All students can expect to be listened to and have their complaints investigated. If a student feels their complaint has not been properly dealt with they may take the matter to their Key Stage Lead.

Students who have suffered racist or sexist behaviour, abuse, bullying or intimidation will be supported by the school and in particular by their Pastoral Manager and Key Stage Lead. Anyone who has committed such offences will be dealt with appropriately – in the case of students this may include exclusion from the school.

All students should treat each other and staff with respect.

6 **Parents/carers, visitors and contract staff**

Parents/carers are very important to the school and in particular they have much to contribute to the single equality scheme; their views are welcome and valued at all times. We ask that all parents/carers fully support the school single equality scheme.

The school will discuss with parents/carers incidents of racist, disability, sexist abuse or bullying and harassment incidents in which their sons or daughters have been involved.

If parents/carers are aware of incidents of racism, sexism or bullying then they should contact their child's Pastoral Manager.

Any visitors or contract staff visiting or working at the school who become aware of any incidents of racism, sexism, disability or other discrimination should report them to the Co-heads or one of the senior staff. They should also abide by the code of conduct established by the school in relation to the single equality scheme.

7 **Implementation**

The school will operate the policy in respect of all staff appointments and will monitor gender and ethnicity balance.

All subject teaching and pastoral programmes of study will take into account the objectives and guidelines of this policy.

Information will be collected about students' performance and progress in all areas of school activity, including racial groupings, to analyse trends that could have an adverse impact on students' attainment:

- Admissions and transfer procedures.
- Assessment, and subsequent groupings by ability/attainment levels.
- Curriculum, teaching and learning (including language and cultural needs).
- Student behaviour, discipline, punishment and reward.
- Exclusions (fixed term and permanent).
- Racism, racial harassment and bullying.
- Staff recruitment and career development.
- Membership of the governing body.
- Parental involvement.
- Working with the community.
- Support, advice and guidance given by teachers/tutors/Pastoral Managers/ learning mentors/counsellors.

All contraventions of this policy will be treated as disciplinary matters.

8 **Evaluation and Review**

This policy will be promoted effectively to all stakeholders in line with all school policies, ensuring that staff, students and parents understand and meet their responsibilities.

The policy will be reviewed formally every 3 years in line with other school policies, and informally on an annual basis.

The single equality scheme should impact upon all the policies and procedures in Batley Girls' High School.

9 **Additional notes on disability equality**

The disability provisions in the Equality Act mainly replicate those in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 and place a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard for the following when carrying out and delivering services:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminating discrimination and harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled people.
- Taking steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment and requiring that reasonable adjustments are made where needed.

10 **Promoting disability equality**

Batley Girls' High School operates in ways to ensure each and every person at our school who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is treated without disadvantage. We will take reasonable steps to avoid disadvantage.

Awareness of disability equality will over time ensure that equality for disabled children and adults is woven into the culture of our school in practical and demonstrated ways.

We will maintain information about all our school members who have a condition that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities.

We will embrace all disabilities including those due to:

- Cancer.
- Diabetes.
- Epilepsy.
- HIV.
- Multiple sclerosis.
- Hearing or sight impairments.

- Mobility difficulties.
- Mental health or learning difficulties.

11 **Monitoring disability equality**

The governing body will ensure that matters of confidentiality are dealt with appropriately. We will ensure parents/carers and members of staff understand which impairments and health conditions meet the definition of disability and why it is important that school has information about disability and health conditions.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of our policies and practices, all staff members will be given the opportunity to raise personal issues throughout the school year.

Batley Girls' High School will make sure students feel comfortable in school and confident to raise any issues or difficulties they have which may be as a result of an impairment or health condition.

When admitting new students to the school we will ensure information about disability is shared. When appointing new staff, we will ensure that our arrangements for recruiting, developing and retaining disabled employees promote equal opportunities.

12 **Summary**

Batley Girls' High School participates in a variety of events that promote understanding and appreciation of race, disability and gender issues.

The curriculum includes opportunities for students to understand issues relating to the key areas of race, disability and gender. Visual displays within the school reflect race, disability and gender issues appropriately.

All students are encouraged to participate fully in school life and every effort is made to ensure positive contribution from them.

Every effort is made to ensure that the physical accessibility needs of students, staff and visitors to the school are met.

Open evenings are held in areas of the school most easily accessed by parents and carers. The needs of parents, students and staff are considered in respect of publishing and sending out information.