

Birkdale High School Equality Objectives Progress report June 2016

Although it is early to fully assess impact, progress has been made towards achieving the Equality objectives set for the school.

- 1 The School Council is active and recognised throughout the school. There is a system in place to disseminate and cascade information back to the forms and it also reports back to SLT although these opportunities need to be increased to a termly report. The school council has been instrumental in raising and driving the school's work on tackling homophobia. Members of the school council have also contributed to wider forum at the Southport and Sefton level and Birkdale students were selected to present their views to councillors as part of the 2039 vision working group. The school's Stonewall/LGBT group is mainly composed of students and is steering the school's work towards achieving the Stonewall partner award by developing a policy and action plan. Posters have been placed around school, books have been purchased and an audit conducted.
- 2 There is a wide range of clubs on offer and an active drive to steer disadvantaged students to attend. The Science Clubs is composed to a great proportion of PP/SEN and/or vulnerable students. The school pays the DofE fees for disadvantaged students as well as subsidising where appropriate the cost of visits. There is also a hardship Policy in place.
- 3 A member of SLT was appointed to champion progress for all identified groups. A clear action plan is in place that identifies a range of measures to be implemented (see PP plan). It is too early to measure impact (September 2016).
- 4 Training has taken place on Equality/Diversity Act for all teaching staff and some support staff. Training taken place on Stonewall/LGBT for all teaching staff and some support staff.

Birkdale High School Equality Objectives 2015

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was created by the Equality Act 2010 and replaced the race, disability and gender equality duties. The duty came into force in April 2011 and extends to all the aspects of a person's identity – known as 'protected characteristics' – that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The equality duty has two main parts: the 'general' equality duty and 'specific duties'.

The **general equality duty** sets out the equality matters that schools need to consider when making decisions that affect pupils or staff with different protected characteristics. This duty has three elements. In carrying out their functions public bodies are required to have 'due regard' when making decisions and developing policies, to the need to:

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

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity is defined further in the Equality Act 2010 as having due regard to the need to:

1. Remove or minimise disadvantages.
2. Take steps to meet different needs.
3. Encourage participation when it is disproportionately low.

For a school, having 'due regard' means:

- When making a decision or taking an action a school must assess whether it may have implications for people with particular protected characteristics.
- It should consider equality implications before and at the time that it develops policy and takes decisions; not as an afterthought, and it needs to keep them under review.
- The equality duty has to be integrated into the carrying out of a school's functions. The analysis necessary to comply with the duty should be carried out rigorously and with an open mind – it is not a question of just ticking boxes.
- Schools need to do this themselves and cannot delegate responsibility for carrying out the duty to anyone else.

In order to help schools in England meet the general equality duty, there are two **specific equality duties** that they are required to carry out. Schools have to:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty at least annually
- Publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

The specific objectives set by the governors at Birkdale High School for the 2015-2016 are:

1. To increase the level of pupil voice by extending our traditional school council to include a fair representation of all pupils in school, and in this way to foster good relationships in the school between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not
2. To increase the membership of vulnerable pupils in out-of-school clubs and activities, and in this way to reduce or remove inequalities in attainment throughout the school, particularly inequalities relating to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act
3. To narrow the gap in achievement between vulnerable groups of pupils and other pupils, and in this way to reduce or remove inequalities in attainment throughout the school, particularly inequalities relating to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act
4. To increase staff's understanding of equality and its implications on a day to day basis, and in this way to reduce or remove inequalities in attainment throughout the school, particularly inequalities relating to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act'.