

Equality and Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Old Swinford Hospital is a state boarding school for boys and girls with a small number of day students and our community has strong and shared values which underlie and guide us in all that we do so that:

- 1.1.1. Christian witness lies at the heart of this School, and we welcome people of all faiths and none.
- 1.1.2. We value people from all backgrounds and aim to encourage understanding, trust and respect of others.
- 1.1.3. We expect students to show emotional maturity, so we aim to provide them with the skills, knowledge and spiritual and moral guidance that they will need throughout life.
- 1.1.4. We believe there is great dignity in difference and we set out to encourage students to celebrate the diversity that exists in our school community.

1.2. The School seeks to develop an educational and boarding environment in which there is recognition of the positive benefits and opportunities afforded by living in a rich, diverse and multi-cultured society. We understand the principles of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act)¹ and the need to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equal opportunities. The School recognises discrimination is unacceptable and considers that stereotyping inhibits freedom of choice, restricts ambitions and limits horizons. Positive action will be taken against all forms of discrimination through words, attitude or conduct.

1.3. The Act defines four kinds of unlawful behaviour² and nine protected characteristics which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are:

- Age³
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership⁴
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

1.2. The Act also makes it unlawful to:

- 1.2.1. Discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or potential student in relation to admissions, in the way it provides education or access to any benefit, facility or services or by excluding them or subjecting them to any other detriment;
- 1.2.2. Victimise a student for anything done in relation to the Act by their parent or sibling;
- 1.2.3. Discriminate because of the sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment of another person with whom the student is associated, and

¹ The Act deals with the way in which schools treat their pupils and prospective pupils; the relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope. (The Equality Act 2010 and schools – Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, May 2014).

² Direct discrimination; indirect discrimination; harassment and victimisation.

³ Age is not a protected characteristic applicable to schools in relation to education or the provision of services even when a student is over the age of 18.

⁴ Marriage and civil partnership is applicable to schools only in relation to employment.

- 1.2.4. Discriminate because of a characteristic which you think a person has even if they do not have it.
- 1.3. The School is mindful of its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and has due regard to the need to:
 - 1.3.1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
 - 1.3.2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who have a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and
 - 1.3.3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 1.4. Appendices:
 - 1.4.1. Appendix A to this Policy sets out in broad terms how we can demonstrate the School's commitment to equality.
 - 1.4.2. Appendix B to this Policy sets out the School's Equality Objectives and will include updates from time to time to report on how these are being met.

Both appendices are working documents which may be updated from time to time independent of the Policy which will remain the underlying guidance for principles and practice.

2. Principles

- 2.1. The School aims to ensure that:
 - 2.1.1. An atmosphere is created which recognises all cultures and fosters positive attitudes and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging.
 - 2.1.2. There is an awareness that a successful community relies on all its members and that we all depend on one another.
 - 2.1.3. Students and staff respect and value differences between people by promoting equality and diversity.
 - 2.1.4. Self-esteem is promoted and individuals are respected and valued equally, regardless of their lifestyle or language, physical or intellectual ability, age, gender, religious, cultural or social backgrounds.
 - 2.1.5. All students and staff are encouraged and able to achieve their full potential.
 - 2.1.6. Students have equal access to the curriculum and are fully prepared for life in a diverse society.
 - 2.1.7. Staff are aware of the need for the curriculum both to reflect and make use of cultural diversity and to prepare students for life in a pluralist society.
 - 2.1.8. Positive action is taken against all forms of inequality so that we:
 - Identify and, as far as possible, remove or minimise the disadvantages affecting people that are connected to a particular characteristic they have;
 - Take steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic, and
 - Encourage people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in activities.
- 2.2. Information is published showing how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met.
- 2.3. Relevant, suitable and achievable Equality Objectives, that are both specific and measurable, are drawn up and published and these are used to help improve the school experience of a range of different students. In future years we will report on the steps being taken, and the progress made, towards meeting these objectives.

3. Practice Statements

3.1. School Ethos and Inclusiveness

- 3.1.1. A climate of tolerance, understanding and mutual respect should be encouraged and discourteous and inconsiderate behaviour avoided.
- 3.1.2. Care should be taken not to stereotype when allocating tasks to staff and students.
- 3.1.3. Display materials and resources should reflect positively on a wide range of cultural, religious and racial backgrounds, disabilities and gender issues.
- 3.1.4. Opportunities should be sought to celebrate differing cultural and religious festivals.
- 3.1.5. Care should be exercised in the pronunciation and spelling of names.
- 3.1.6. All planning, including for events, activities and journeys, should ensure that adequate provision is made for specific cultural or religious requirements and for any disabilities so that, as far as reasonable and practical, no student would be excluded because of a lack of suitable provision.
- 3.1.7. Assemblies should allow the participation of all students.
- 3.1.8. We should recognise and celebrate the achievements of all students.
- 3.1.9. Reasonable steps should be taken to provide for the dietary requirements of different groups.
- 3.1.10. A clear and supportive system through which concerns may be voiced regarding discriminatory behaviour and attitudes should be available and known about.
- 3.1.11. The structure of boarding within the School should have regard to the background and diverse needs of students and staff.
- 3.1.12. An accessibility plan⁵ should be determined to ensure that those with disabilities are not disadvantaged and in particular set out measures to:
 - Increase the extent to which students with disabilities can participate in the School's curriculum;
 - Improve the School's physical environment to increase the extent to which students with disabilities are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School, and
 - Improve the delivery of information which is readily accessible to students who do not have disabilities, to students with disabilities.

3.2. School Environment

- 3.2.1. Reasonable steps should be taken to meet the needs of people with disabilities to access the school environment and particularly when new building work is carried out or alterations made.
- 3.2.2. As far as is reasonable, effective and practicable the School should provide auxiliary aids and support that are directly related to disabled students' educational needs so they can integrate in all parts of school life.
- 3.2.3. The School should specifically consider measures to improve inclusion and physical access in determining their accessibility plan.

3.3. Admissions

- 3.3.1. The admissions process should not discriminate against any potential student however:
 - The School is a boarding school and places in boys' boarding accommodation may not be taken by girls and vice versa.

⁵ The Act permits reasonable adjustments which may give preferential treatment to an individual with a disability.

- All applicants for boarding places must be assessed suitable to board⁶ before they are admitted and remain suitable to board whilst holding a boarding place.
- 3.3.2. The School has a religious designation of Church of England but does not use faith criteria in its admissions process. Those of all faiths and none are equally welcomed.

3.4. Curriculum

- 3.4.1. The curriculum should reflect our multi-cultural and culturally diverse society and its content and delivery should meet the needs of all students.
- 3.4.2. Resources should reflect and support ethnic, cultural and religious diversity.
- 3.4.3. The curriculum should include work which raises a positive awareness of equal opportunities.
- 3.4.4. Grouping policies should have a clear educational rationale and be flexible.
- 3.4.5. Care should be taken to ensure that all students receive attention from the teacher and that they are encouraged to collaborate and interact.
- 3.4.6. Seating arrangements should facilitate the equal participation of all students.
- 3.4.7. Inclusive language should be used where possible and discriminatory language, images and behaviour must not be used.
- 3.4.8. Classroom practice should ensure that teaching and assessment methods encourage all students and that all students can participate equally with no group dominating at the expense of others.
- 3.4.9. All staff should be aware that their expectations influence achievement and be prepared to address the issues which this raises.

3.5. Parents, Staff, Governors and the Wider Community

- 3.5.1. The School should provide equal access, at appropriate times, for parents and all members of the school community to school buildings, facilities, events and staff.
- 3.5.2. Those responsible for staff recruitment and selection should ensure that procedures are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties.
- 3.5.3. The School should ensure that pay and performance processes operate fairly, equitably and are not discriminatory and report on such to Governors.
- 3.5.4. The School should ensure that all disciplinary issues or grievances are dealt with fairly, equitably and are not discriminatory.
- 3.5.5. Staff are subject to professional requirements, the School's curriculum, school policies and anti-discrimination duties towards both colleagues and students.
- 3.5.6. Teaching should be based on fact and should enable students to develop an understanding of differences. A teacher's ability to express their views should not extend to allowing them to discriminate against others. This principle extends also to support staff in the classroom and to staff in boarding.
- 3.5.7. Parental involvement in their children's education is to be encouraged, as is regular participation of all parents in consultations, information gathering exercises and celebratory and social events.
- 3.5.8. Complaints should be dealt with seriously, sensitively and without discrimination.

⁶ By doing so the School is acting in accordance with its responsibilities under the Children Act 1989 (as amended) to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders.

3.6. Training and Development

- 3.6.1. The School will ensure that staff and governors are able to access the appropriate levels of support and training necessary to ensure that they are aware of equality and diversity practices and procedures.
- 3.6.2. The skills of all staff are recognised and valued. All staff are encouraged to share their expertise and knowledge.

4. Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation

- 4.1. The Headmaster, together with his senior team, will implement, monitor and evaluate all aspects of this Policy, reporting at intervals, as appropriate, to the Governing Body.
- 4.2. Monitoring implementation will be by:
 - 4.2.1. All members of the school community having clear avenues for consultation, notification and complaint.
 - 4.2.2. Students and their parents/carers where appropriate.
 - 4.2.3. Staff:
 - Promoting an inclusive and collaborative ethos in the School;
 - Modelling good practice;
 - Challenging unequal treatment, inappropriate behaviour and language;
 - Responding appropriately to incidents of discrimination and harassment;
 - Showing appropriate support for students with additional needs, and
 - Maintaining a good level of awareness of issues surrounding equalities.
 - 4.2.4. Teachers monitoring their own daily lessons and strategies, challenging stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour and language, and recording discriminatory incidents.
 - 4.2.5. Housemasters, Heads of Year, Subject Leaders and Tutors monitoring overall provision and supporting staff in fulfilling all aspects of this Policy.
 - 4.2.6. Senior management reviewing the Policy as part of the School's Improvement and Development Plan, maintaining and scrutinising records, and supporting students and staff.
 - 4.2.7. Governors receiving reports on all aspects of equality and equality issues, on progress in meeting the School's Equality Objectives and on the delivery of the Accessibility Plan.
- 4.3. Monitoring and evaluation will include:
 - 4.3.1. Regular monitoring of attendance records, grouping policies, examination results, and incident log sheets recording discriminatory behaviour with timely and appropriate response to matters coming forth from the monitoring process.
 - 4.3.2. Student and parent surveys.
 - 4.3.3. The monitoring of teaching and curriculum development to ensure high expectations of staff and students.
- 4.4. Policy Planning and Review
 - 4.4.1. Policies, procedures and activities should not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and the kinds of barriers and disadvantages which people may face in relation to their race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age.
 - 4.4.2. School policy development will have due regard to the underlying principles of this Policy and be developed in a framework that aims to eliminate discrimination and discriminatory practices and promotes equality, diversity and good relations.

The School's Equality Measures in Practice

In evaluating and demonstrating any level of commitment it is essential that the School knows about itself, what it is set up to do and the people it will come into contact with either as an employer or as a teacher for example. We are a diverse community and that is something we celebrate and take strength from because it helps make us more aware of the individualities and characteristics that come together to build the community.

At the heart of what we do are the students we teach and our vision for each and every one of them is one in which they can discover who they can be and where they can receive the best of education in a safe, secure, happy and healthy environment.

Who are our students?

- For more than 350 years our student community in the lower school was exclusively boys and we were a boys school where they could board or be day students. From 2014 there were some day girls in the Sixth Form but all of this changed in September 2021 when the School admitted girls from Year 7 and, just like boys, those girls could board or be day students.
- Our intake of girls into the lower school was phased so as to best manage the significant expansion programme we had set ourselves. The girl community is still smaller than that of our boys but it is growing. Girls now make up 32.7% of school numbers and the next few years will see this gap narrow.
- The school is primarily a boarding school where boarders represent 69.1% of the school population below the Sixth Form.
- The breakdown of our student population by ethnicity, shows that 64% are White British compared to 63% when we last reported and to the national statistic of 62.6% for the same group. The remainder of our students are split across the various other categories of ethnicity with no one other category predominating and with only 1.6% not declaring their ethnicity compared to the national statistic of 1.7% being unclassified.
- Based on the same data, 94% have English as a first language versus a national picture of 81.2%.
- The School has a religious designation of Church of England however we welcome those of all faiths and none. Approximately 50% of our students are of a Christian faith which is a lesser proportion than previously reported, 18% have no religion and other faiths represented include Buddhism, Hindu, Judaism, Muslim and Sikhism.
- The proportion of students eligible for free school meals or pupil premium is low (5% and 6% respectively) and we continue to work closely and tirelessly with Local Authorities and charities to actively support disadvantaged and Looked After Children who now make up 6.8% of our students.
- The incidence of students with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) is 1.85 which is lower than average (2.4%) but approximately 14.9% (previously reported 10% and national average 12.4%) of students have identified needs of various kinds and we are seeing this growing.
- Historically attendance has been good which is to be expected in a boarding school and where it was not then it was both specific and identifiable. The numbers involved are still generally low but they are changing and it is of concern that so much absence relates to mental health concerns and concerns relating to the lasting effects of the pandemic and lockdown.
- Whilst the pandemic years created uncertainty in data comparison we can cautiously see from 2022/2023 that the School, in relation to other schools locally and nationally, remains well placed in what our students achieved at the end of KS4. Their progress was positive at +.04 with 98% staying on in education. 62% achieved grade 5 or above in English and Maths, compared to

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42% nationally and 37% locally, with attainment of 54.9 compared to 44.5 nationally and 42.4 locally. At KS5, whilst a good number of students do very well indeed, and most of our students get to the study destination or apprenticeship/career path of their choice, our challenge remains to raise the attainment bar for more of our students.

This summation reflects our underlying vision for all of our students. We do not necessarily single out groupings to monitor and work with; we work at an individual level because all students are equally treated, and all have some characteristic, diversity and individuality. It is for this reason you will see the School's Equality Objectives referred to in Appendix B are driven by key themes to enable all of our students to realise and exceed their potential.

We set out in the following sections how we seek to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under Equalities legislation and how we monitor and report on this and we do so by considering our approach to:

- The Aims of the School
- Ethos & Vision
- Behaviour Policy
- Employment, pay & appraisal and work practices
- The National Curriculum
- The School Curriculum
- Admissions
- SEND & Medical Conditions
- Looked After, Previously Looked After & Other Disadvantaged Students
- Democracy
- The Rule of Law
- Links with Other Faiths
- Preparation for the Future
- Training, Information & Education
- Accessibility
- Community Cohesion

Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under Equalities legislation

	What we aim to do	How we do it
The Aims of the School	<p>The School’s Aims include our shared values and these encapsulate how the school community live:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian witness lies at the heart of this School, and we welcome people of all faiths and none. • We value people from all backgrounds and aim to encourage understanding, trust and respect of others. • We expect students to show emotional maturity, so we aim to provide them with the skills, knowledge and spiritual and moral guidance that they will need throughout life. • We believe there is great dignity in difference and we set out to encourage students to celebrate the diversity that exists in our School community. 	<p>Our curriculum, together with our extensive wider activities, contribute to the delivery of these values by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education into every one of its lessons. • Exploring faiths from around the world so learning to appreciate and understand diversity and celebrate faiths and religious festivals from across the globe. • Promoting and developing a better understanding of British Values. • Raising awareness of exploitation in accordance with national guidelines and particularly of the dangers of radicalisation, extremism, child trafficking and exploitation. • Delivering an assembly/tutorial programme driven by current issues.
	<p>Evidence of practice</p> <p>Our Beliefs & Issues programme has been extensively rewritten and acknowledged by Ofsted. It is delivered by a range of staff who deliver fact driven information promoting classroom discussion and consideration.</p> <p>We have had former pupils come into school and discuss overcoming challenges in the workplace (Yr 10-13) and external speakers coming in to discuss living with autism (Yr 7-10)</p> <p>Examples of assemblies/tutor programmes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to unpick the thinking of influencer Andrew Tait • International Women’s Day • Discussions around misogynistic language in the Sixth Form, it’s use and how girls perceive its effect on them • And a whole variety of discussions to prepare for and understand potential concerns from the school community around girls joining the lower school. • We hold half-termly girls’ assemblies whilst we are still on the journey to full co-education where they learn about women’s rights and education in the developing world and the place for female role models today. These presentations can be both internal and external speakers. 	

	What we aim to do	How we do it
Ethos & Vision	<p>As a Christian school, our value system is based on a particular view of the human person as somebody who is dignified, important and full of potential. It is the School's mission to have its students realise this potential so that they may bring greater benefit to the common good.</p> <p>The School expects its students to develop as good citizens, adequately prepared for the responsibilities of the wider world, through active involvement in service to the school and the local community, through a commitment to the enjoyment of learning throughout their lives and through an education that has been underpinned by the moral and spiritual values of a Christian community whilst having a profound respect of those of other faiths and none.</p>	<p>Our curriculum and wider activities promote a climate of tolerance, understanding and mutual respect and our behaviour standards and school rules define tolerance and respect as underlying principles.</p> <p>Through the Beliefs and Issues programme students learn about their rights and personal freedoms as well as the responsibilities which accompany them.</p> <p>We have a wide and varied Assembly programme supported by a tutorial system both of which are responsive to addressing, at a whole school or particular cohort level, concerns or issues relating either to the School or outside of school as they arise.</p> <p>We encourage debate because it gives voice to a range of opinion and widens our understanding. It makes us think and reflect on the views of others. We don't have to agree with these views; they may help affirm our own but they will also help us appreciate there is more than one way of looking at something. We have an active debating society who have reached national competitive finals and gone on to represent internationally, we host a Model United Nations and on a more everyday basis provide opportunities for discussion in lessons, Houses and through school committees.</p>
	<p>Evidence of practice</p> <p>Our Beliefs & Issues programme has been extensively rewritten and acknowledged by Ofsted. It is delivered by a range of staff who deliver fact driven information promoting classroom discussion and consideration.</p> <p>We have introduced a competitive house system, bringing together students from across year groups be they boarders, day students, girls or boys and they are successfully working together to achieve points for their competitive group, each of them drawing on their own particular talents and all of them celebrating the achievements of their fellow housemates. This collegiate empathy helps promote participation from those who might otherwise stand back and it encourages regulation because losing points for poor behaviour or work ethic is not something a student wants to be bringing to their competitive house.</p> <p>In the section above we refer to examples of our assembly/tutor programme. Another example of team building and collegiate spirit would be a recent assembly led by a player in the 1st XV after reaching the semi-finals of a national rugby tournament. The true spirit and ethos of the school was carried though with the support of the whole school when this team and the Under 15's went on to both win their respective age tournaments. The praise of their peers and staff was unwavering, the aspirations of students raised immeasurably.</p>	

	What we aim to do	How we do it
Behaviour Policy	<p>The Act deals with the way in which schools treat their pupils and prospective pupils; the relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope. However, the School does not believe that this means that they can condone or ignore any form of discriminatory behaviour between peers at all.</p> <p>The School has a strong behaviour policy which includes the School's rules and a specific section on anti-bullying, harassment and assault.</p> <p>It is shaped to support the School's ethos and aims and defines the key elements and the moral code by which we chose to live and refers to the gospel of Matthew - <i>"Always treat others as you would like them to treat you."</i> (Matthew 7:12).</p> <p>It is founded on the premise that actions and choice of behaviour have consequences.</p> <p>Due regard is had to equality considerations in the application of the behavior policy.</p>	<p>The development of the whole of this Policy is done in conjunction with staff members and with students through the School Council so that all stakeholders buy into it.</p> <p>The Policy is very specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising that bullying frequently focuses on individual differences or anything that is implied to be different from the majority and that this undermines the School's work in promoting equal opportunities and teaching social and moral principles. • In not accepting what some might call banter as its limits and definition cannot be expressly defined and one person's banter is another's abuse. • Recognising that bullying may not solely be between students; adults may be equally vulnerable and equally liable to offend. • Acknowledging the whole School's responsibility to support each member of its community. <p>Governors review reports on both the incidence of poor behaviour and of the level of sanctions imposed.</p> <p>The School's Beliefs & Issues programme allows students to learn about their rights and personal freedoms as well as the responsibilities which accompany them and promotes lively discussion on matters which include prejudice based discrimination and bullying.</p> <p>The Welfare Committee of the School Council brings students from all houses and age groups together not only to discuss these issues but also to influence the formulation of the Behaviour Policy.</p> <p>The careers and universities programme, as well as boarding life, helps prepare young people to manage the greater freedoms which they will encounter on leaving school after the Sixth Form.</p>

	What we aim to do	How we do it
	<p>In managing behaviour, the Behaviour Management Policy & Practice Statement reflects the principles of the School's Behaviour Policy so that there is fairness in the application of the Policy.</p>	<p>We take account of equality issues in relation to the management of behaviour and any resultant rewards & sanctions so that there should be no differentiation between students in the application of the Policy on the basis of any of the protected characteristics or in respect of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This fundamental underlying principle acknowledges that reasonable adjustment may be made to take account of those needs.</p> <p>There is a reporting and recording process for the school day which provides timely and consistent reporting which in turn has helped to identify and deal with growing concerns before they become issues. The system has yet to be fully adapted for boarding.</p> <p>Governors review reports both on the incidence of poor behaviour and of the level of sanctions imposed and the Headmaster regularly reports to their meetings on these matters and through his termly report, setting out any concerns, initiatives and developments.</p>
	<p>Evidence of practice</p> <p>Students understand the system of sanctions and the School's high expectations in both the classroom and in boarding. It is regularly addressed in assemblies and tutorials.</p> <p>Sanctions and rewards are included in the competitive house programme which encourages regulation because losing points for poor behaviour or work ethic is not something a student wants to be bringing to their competitive house.</p> <p>Parents are informed of rewards and sanctions. There is no minimum reporting level therefore parents also hear about repeat low level concerns.</p> <p>HELP posters signpost where to go if a student needs to talk to someone.</p> <p>There is evidence of student engagement in setting the framework for the whole community e.g. through the review of the behaviour policy and via school council.</p> <p>There is a designated Governor for behaviour.</p> <p>Behaviour data and reports, including by type, gender and age are reviewed by the Governing Body at least Termly.</p>	

	What we aim to do	How we do it
Employment, pay & appraisal and work practices	<p>The Governing Body is firmly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and promotes this in all aspects of school life, including the advertising of posts, the appointment of staff, promoting and paying staff and staff training and development.</p>	<p>We take account of equality issues in the employment, promotion and training opportunities offered to staff and the School's policies refer to this.</p> <p>School policies refer to the relevant underlying legislation and regulation and apply these in their working. Legal and HR advice is taken to ensure that practices are legal, fair and equitable.</p> <p>The annual employment policy review process includes consultation across all staff.</p> <p>Policies are reviewed upon notification of any changes in law or best practice and at least annually.</p> <p>With the admission of girls from Year 7 the School must ensure girl students have sufficient staff they can go to so it is reasonable to build up female representation at all levels in school however, a post will not be offered to a person based solely on gender.</p>
	<p>There are some specific exceptions to the religion or belief provisions of the Equality Act for employment by schools designated as having a religious character so that in a voluntary-aided school, preference may be given for the appointment, remuneration and promotion of teachers at the school, to persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whose religious opinions are in accordance with the tenets of the school's religion; • who attend religious worship in accordance with those tenets; or • who give, or are willing to give, religious education at the school in accordance with those tenets. 	<p>The School have not elected or found the need to apply the exceptions.</p>
	<p>The Governing Body is firmly committed to ensuring equal opportunity in recruitment and selection procedures.</p> <p>We have added wellbeing to our staff policies to reduce and prevent escalation to sickness absence as much as we can.</p>	<p>The School has fair and equitable practices in place which are used in all aspects of recruitment from the initial advertisement through interviews, selection and to becoming employed.</p> <p>Attendance and sickness absence is monitored and reported.</p>

	What we aim to do	How we do it
	<p>The process of setting performance objectives and their evaluation at the end of the cycle should be fair and consistent across all staff.</p>	<p>The School's policies on appraisal provide a route for any member of staff to express concerns or make complaints about the pay and appraisal process.</p> <p>The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the appraisal process and that it complies with all relevant legislation and requires the Headmaster to report annually on this and including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence to satisfy them that the process has been fairly and equitably operated and has been openly objective and transparent. • Feedback from a staff survey commissioned for that purpose. • A review of the staff profile to identify any groups that may need special consideration to ensure equality and a review of a sample of any so identified.
	<p>The School does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any member of staff.</p>	<p>The School's Policy on harassment at work refers to all staff being responsible for treating their colleagues with dignity and respect and to harassment and bullying behaviour not always be intentional but nevertheless not acceptable.</p> <p>The Email and Internet Use Policy informs staff of how to use social media responsibly and gives key advice which might help protect their online reputation or prevent them making, or sending, otherwise ill-advised contact.</p> <p>We respect the religious beliefs of staff and have a policy in place to accommodate all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.</p>
	<p>Evidence of practice</p> <p>A girls' lead has been appointed.</p> <p>The School's policies relating to employment and the work place are reviewed annually and in consultation with all staff.</p> <p>Both School and the Governing Body review employee focussed data including for absence and sickness absence.</p> <p>The School's email policy now includes protocols for use of communication outside of school hours in order to promote a work/life balance.</p> <p>The Governors' Pay Review Panel review the process of setting objectives and evaluation against these at the end of the cycle to ensure fairness, consistency and openness.</p>	

Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who have a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
The National Curriculum	<p>The National Curriculum Framework (Section 4) refers to Inclusion, to the setting of suitable challenges and to responding to students’ needs and overcoming potential barriers for individuals and groups of students and including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers should set high expectations for every student and be ambitious in target setting. • Work should be planned to stretch the most able, develop those who have lower levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds, do not have English as a first language and support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. • Planning should ensure there are no barriers to every student achieving and enable inclusion of all students in all lessons. • Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment. 	<p>Planning begins well before lesson planning with the formulation of curriculum and progress initiatives in the School Improvement & Development Plan (SIDP) which helps inform departmental planning and target setting through the Subject Audit Plan & Self Evaluation (SAPSE) process.</p> <p>In turn this goes on to inform elements of the setting of teachers and staff objectives against which they will be measured through the appraisal system over the year creating a vital link between whole school and departmental aims so that all staff focus on common goals and have expectations of their students.</p> <p>Tools have been and continue to be developed to monitor and track student progress and attainment and to inform intervention measures. The Governing Body receive reports at least termly referring to the departmental SAPSE programme and progress against improvement objectives. They also meet periodically with the Assistant Head, QTL to better understand the challenges, the initiatives they developed, progress and whether the outcomes were successful.</p> <p>The Governing Body receive reports and data, at least termly, on progress and attainment throughout the School and for key vulnerable groups.</p>
<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>Planning and self-evaluation process has operated during the year managed by SLT via Subject Leaders and via line managers.</p> <p>The process has been reviewed by Governors in their meetings both from the angle of departmental targets and plans and the setting of individual objectives to help progress departmental plans.</p>		

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
The School Curriculum	<p>The curriculum should reflect our multi-cultural and culturally diverse society as well as those students with additional needs. Its content and delivery must meet the needs of all students and it should include work which raises a positive awareness of equal opportunities.</p>	<p>We take account of equalities issues in the way we provide education for our students and the way we provide access to facilities and services.</p> <p>The School's Beliefs & Issues programme is designed to respond quickly to subjects/issues within the school community enabling it to be used as a tool for efficiently reacting to, informing and educating about and eradicating concerns.</p> <p>The Governing Body receive reports and meet periodically with the Assistant Head, QTL to better understand the challenges, the initiatives developed, progress and whether the outcomes were successful. They also meet with the SENCO, periodically, to hear likewise.</p>
	<p>We should positively support, as far as is reasonable and proportionate, those who are less able to access elements of the School's curriculum and other activities as well as their peers, so that they all have equal chances.</p>	<p>We collect and analyse data on an individual basis and for relevant to vulnerable groups and use this as the basis for developing personalised intervention.</p> <p>The Governing Body receive reports and data, at least termly, on progress and attainment throughout the School and for key vulnerable groups.</p> <p>The School allocates resources as far as it can to assist those who do not have English as a first Language and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.</p> <p>The School's tutorial system is designed as both a curriculum and a pastoral support mechanism.</p> <p>The School make time available with a School Counsellor who works with students to provide individual support for pastoral and behavioural issues. Staff regularly receive CPD information relating to aspects of such work so they may be better equipped to manage this in the classroom or in boarding. The School will be further developing its understanding in working with the increasing pressures causing mental health concerns and has chosen to keep it as one of their Equality Objectives.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>The introduction of Edulink has enabled student data capture and welfare plans to develop into more useable information which can be available across the organisation.</p> <p>Accessibility to KS5 was of concern. Additional qualifications continue to be considered with ASDAN already introduced.</p> <p>Student voice is being used in gathering thoughts about prep and curriculum development for example.</p> <p>The development of an SEN resource in Swinford Court has proved to be a success.</p> <p>There is a Mental Health Lead and a number of other staff have mental health first aid training. Specialist training has been accessed for matters such as relating attachment, adaptive teaching, autism, self-harm and bereavement.</p>	

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Admissions	It is unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimises a student or potential student in relation to admissions.	We take account of equality issues in relation to admissions and do not discriminate against applicants by treating them less favourably on the grounds of their protected characteristics.
	The School is permitted to provide single sex boarding accommodation.	The planned admission number takes into account the number of girls boarding spaces and the number of boys boarding spaces. There is no differentiation for day places.
	The School has a religious designation of Church of England.	The School chooses not to use faith criteria in its admissions process. Those of all faiths and none are equally welcomed.
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>Admissions to Year 7 are managed under the co-ordinated admissions scheme by the Local Authority. Year 12 and in-year transfers are dealt with in-house.</p> <p>Oversubscription criteria are not based on faith.</p> <p>We actively work with local authorities and charities to make boarding feasible for those students with a boarding need but whose families could not otherwise afford boarding fees.</p> <p>A profile of the school demonstrates that we are a diverse and mixed community and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 50% of our student population are of Christian faith. • Since becoming co-educational in 2021 the proportion of girls already stands at 32.6% and is growing. • The proportion of students with additional needs has increased from 10% to almost 17% since last reporting. 	

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
SEND & Medical Conditions	<p>The School should plan and support students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and they recognise that there are those who need this support beyond those students with EHCP's.</p>	<p>The School has policies and procedures in place to work in partnership with parents, carers and guardians to support those students at school with special needs, with disabilities or who have medical conditions including having a nominated SENCO and nursing staff in School's medical centre.</p> <p>The Governing Body meet with the SENCO at least annually to develop their understanding of the range of current needs of students in the School, the scope of work of the learning support group and the ways in which they deliver their support.</p> <p>We are aware of reasonable adjustment duties for students with disabilities and during 2017 carried out an audit of our provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The School's Local Authority physical impairment and medical inclusion officer was consulted as part of the process, along with other relevant parties including students and parents. The results of the audit and the suggestions of the LA officer and other consultees were used to ascertain understanding in the school community of disability and accessibility, priorities for students with SEN and/or disabilities and priorities for students' parents.</p> <p>New and altered facilities since 2020 have improved accessibility and also provided an SEN resource.</p> <p>The School has also consulted staff with responsibility for the induction arrangements for new students to ensure that the particular needs of students with disabilities are recognised in advance, that suitable staff training is provided and that any modifications to the curriculum or premises are fed into the plan before the arrival of the new students.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>Accessibility to KS5 was of concern. Additional qualifications continue to be considered with ASDAN already introduced.</p> <p>The development of an SEN resource in Swinford Court has proved to be a success.</p> <p>Additional and altered facilities have improved accessibility.</p> <p>The Governing Body receive reports and meet periodically with the SENCO to better understand the needs of current students.</p>	

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Looked After, Previously Looked After & Other Disadvantaged Students	<p>The School should plan and support students with who are looked after, were previously looked after or are otherwise from disadvantaged backgrounds and recognise that there are those who need this support beyond those students with specific care plans.</p>	<p>The School has policies and procedures in place to work in partnership with parents, carers and guardians to support those students at school who are looked after, were previously looked after or are otherwise disadvantaged including having a designated teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children and a nominated teacher for disadvantaged students.</p> <p>There is a Governor nominated to liaise with the School in respect of students who are looked after, were previously looked after or are otherwise disadvantaged and reports are made to the Governors' Curriculum & Pupil Welfare Committee periodically.</p> <p>The Governing Body receive reports termly from the designated teacher to develop their understanding of the needs of current students, the challenges they are facing in school and how these are being addressed, the impact of challenges they are facing outside of school and the progress they are making.</p> <p>The School's Foundation continue to support students in boarding.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>There is a designated teacher for LAC and pLAC and there is also a designated governor. Links are developed with parents/carers, with regular reviews. Termly reports are made to the Governing Body.</p>	

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Democracy	Democracy implies that the majority has a voice. Ours is a <i>liberal</i> democracy because key freedoms are developed and protected through our rules and systems and their accountability to the electorate.	<p>Students have the opportunity to have their voices heard through our Student Council and its committees, student questionnaires, subject review and boarding visits, prefect and council meetings with Senior Leaders as well as meetings with Governors.</p> <p>Through our Beliefs & Issues programme, our Assemblies and the Sixth Form enrichment programme we are able to reflect and consider times and places when democracy has not existed or does not exist and to learn from this, gain deeper and more considered understanding and try to achieve the right balance to take forward in our lives and the way we live them.</p> <p>Every November we remember the Old Foleyans who gave their lives or who endured great suffering in order to protect our democratic way of living. We remember that our freedoms have come at a cost.</p>
<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>We monitor and review student voice through online surveys (there are 4-5 of these per year) and also at School Council.</p> <p>Our students are also regularly involved in boarding inspections and sit on student panels for employment interviews which give us the opportunity to monitor student feedback.</p>		
The Rule of Law	<p>Everybody is equal before the law. This also means that where the majority enjoy considerable influence in a democracy, laws do exist to protect minorities from harm so that they too can enjoy individual freedoms whilst accepting shared responsibility.</p> <p>School rules are the same.</p>	<p>From the dining hall queue to the rugby pitch students are expected to develop a respect for rules, an understanding of their place either as a school rule or within the laws of the United Kingdom and the consequences for breaking these.</p> <p>The curriculum also helps explain rules in context, for example, in History or the Beliefs and Issues programmes where students can discover the origins of law and see the consequences of their breakdown or inequitable application and the impact this can have on society and they can further develop their understanding by exploring the UK constitution in Politics & Government.</p> <p>Through the curriculum, our Assemblies, the Sixth Form enrichment programme and debate in School Council as well as a parent's information evening we are all able to reflect and consider the impact of laws, or lawlessness, and of reconciliation, and to learn from this.</p>
<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>The Senior leadership Team monitor both sanctions and rewards in order to look for trends and patterns that tell their own story and we also do this at governor level. This enables us to make judgements on how people are being treated fairly.</p> <p>We also monitor our Beliefs & Issues curriculum and our ICT curriculum and cross reference them with assemblies so that we are touching on similar themes to do with the rule of law across them all.</p>		

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Links with Other Faiths	The School has a religious designation of Church of England and we have strong relationships with the Diocese of Worcester but we also have, and continue to develop, links with faith communities.	<p>The School does not use faith criteria in its admissions process and so has become a multicultural community made up of those of faith and those without.</p> <p>We have hosted Inter-Faith Forums which not only allow members of the local faith communities to engage with the School, but also provide students with an opportunity to put searching and sometimes difficult questions to these visitors.</p>
	We respect the religious beliefs of members of the community and try our best to accommodate all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.	<p>Arrangements are made for observance and practice and for visits to appropriate places of prayer.</p> <p>The Subject Leader for RE are well practised in celebrating and teaching of different faiths, religions and festivals.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>The profile of the School set out at the beginning of this appendix shows that we have students of many faiths and cultures.</p> <p>The School promotes integration through diet, themed menus, religious festivals, cultural days, events and displays etc.</p> <p>Diversity is promoted within the curriculum, in displays around the school and specifically in the Beliefs and Issues programme.</p> <p>The School raises awareness and promotes initiatives through assemblies and tutorials.</p>	

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Preparation for the Future	<p>We prepare students for life in a diverse society so that they are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with people, to problem solve, show initiative and to be able to lead or support others whenever the need arises. • Develop confidence as well as humility and the ability to express and defend their own values. • Take pride in their achievements and know that they can make a difference in the world. 	<p>The teaching of Beliefs & Issues, History and Politics reinforces the value of our liberal democracy. Students have held mock general elections, they can attend a Model United Nations and the Debating Society whilst Assemblies comment on the benefits of democratic politics and debunk hostile counter-narratives.</p> <p>Importantly, students also learn that democracies are not perfect, are usually a 'work in progress' and can themselves be corrupted in times of indifference, dislocation or extremism so that participation in democratic politics is not only a hard earned right, but also an important responsibility.</p> <p>The School's Beliefs & Issues programme allows students to learn about their rights and personal freedoms as well as the responsibilities which accompany them and promotes lively discussion on matters which include prejudice based discrimination and bullying.</p> <p>The Schools' careers and universities programme, as well as boarding life, helps prepare young people to manage the greater freedoms which they will encounter after they leave school.</p> <p>The School uses Unifrog to efficiently and effectively manage the careers programme and all students sign up to the platform giving them wider opportunities to learn about work and related future studies. And enabling them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how interests lead to different education and training pathways. • See what steps they need to take to stand the best chance of application success. • Refer to expert guides explaining how to navigate each step in the application process. • Access and understand information about future study options and labour market opportunities • Use Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). • Compare courses worldwide. • Compare every UK degree, apprenticeship and School Leaver Programme, and every Oxbridge college and FE college course. <p>The work-experience programme is being redeveloped.</p> <p>The co-curriculum also provides numerous opportunities for them to develop their own decision making through activities such as D of E and CCF which promote independence and leadership.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>Unifrog enables us to monitor and track student engagement with careers education and planning. UCAS does the same for university applications.</p> <p>The careers programme is independently audited by the Black Country Schools Consortium each half term.</p> <p>Participation in both D of E and CCF has been encouraged and grown so that there are now 224 enrolled.</p>	

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Training, Information & Education	To provide ongoing learning and training to support development and improvement.	<p>The Beliefs and Issues programme is firmly embedded into the curriculum and as a vehicle for personal development. It has been used extensively over the years to help students understand initiatives and advice linked to radicalisation, CEOP, CSE, FGM, British Values, and mental health and this continues.</p> <p>This programme, combines with an ongoing series of assemblies and tutorials each week where a wide range of topics, issues and concerns have been addressed. These are sufficiently flexible so as to permit them to address matters of concern which might arise with in school or through national/international incidents.</p> <p>The Sixth Form Enrichment programme is a continuing series of lectures, talks and events to broaden minds and stretch horizons.</p> <p>The skills and experience of all staff are recognised and valued and they are encouraged to share their expertise and knowledge. They do this formally through CPD sessions or in smaller departmental groups for example where they feed back on courses they have attended or experience gained.</p> <p>The Schools' careers and universities programme, as well as boarding life, helps prepare young people to manage the greater freedoms which they will encounter after they leave school.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>The Director of Sixth Form keeps under review the enrichment opportunities and speakers who contribute to our post-16 provision. These happen both virtually and in the real world. The Subject Leader for Beliefs & issues reviews his provision via our internal auditing process known as SAPSE.</p>	
Accessibility	<p>The age of some of the School's buildings and the contour of the site is not sympathetic to providing access and accommodation for those with disabilities.</p> <p>Within permitted alterations we endeavour to make adjustments to overcome this or to lessen the degree of inaccessibility as much as we can.</p>	<p>Our renovation works are designed to reasonably accommodate disabilities where practical given the age of the School's buildings and the layout and contours of the campus.</p> <p>Sympathetic general alterations such as provision of handrails are programmed into the routine maintenance schedule as are improvements which will benefit all users such as improvements in outside lighting for example and upgrading the quality of internal lighting.</p> <p>Additional and newly altered facilities have greatly improved accessibility. Where needed, staff are trained in manual handling to ensure correct and safe handling and assistance can be provided for students with disabilities. This also assists where some of the site is less adaptable for independent movement by some disabled persons because of the age and structure of the buildings and because of the gradients across the campus.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>Additional and newly altered facilities have greatly improved accessibility.</p> <p>The SENCO and Bursar have attended training to find how to get most support built into EHCP programmes so that appropriate funding might follow a student's needs.</p>	

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
Community Cohesion	September 2017 we saw the re-introduction of day boys into the lower school and in September 2021 girls joined the lower school as both boarders and day students. It was important that they were made welcome as part of the school community.	Induction programmes include all new students joining the School. The integration of students is monitored and draws on the experience of prior change such as the introduction of a small number of day girls into the Sixth Form. A girls integration lead was appointed to ensure smooth transition.
	The involvement of stakeholders is vital to their support of initiatives and decision making.	Students are actively encouraged to participate in student committees which meet regularly throughout the year, including the School Council, and their views are welcomed by staff and Governors. Student surveys are carried out to collect views on various matters such as boarding life, food and the co-curricular programme and the replies inform future plans and improvements. Staff briefings, meetings and committees take place regularly over the year. Staff are consulted on changes to policies related to employment.
	Boarding means sharing accommodation and living spaces and it is vital to boarders' wellbeing and education that they are happy in their Houses and within the school community.	The allocation to Senior Houses for boys is done with care and through experience after seeing them living in the Junior House for their first year. Girls are appreciating the family feeling of a vertical house from Year 7.
	Expanding our knowledge of diversity expands our understanding.	Because we have a diverse school community we can learn and grow each day. A simple example of how we celebrate this is the menu programme which includes food reflective of events throughout the year, such as Chinese new year, and the nationalities and heritage of some of our students and staff.
	Working together and supporting each other builds strength.	Our senior students volunteer to mentor and support their peers and the younger students and they do this through our peer mentoring programme co-ordinated by the School Counsellor.

	What We Aim to Do	How we do it
	<p>Questions and concerns may arise from time to time and the School tries to act promptly, sensitively and appropriately to resolve matters which may arise.</p> <p>There may be times when individuals consider that their concerns have not been allayed and they chose to make a complaint. There are clear and publicised routes through which complaints can be made.</p> <p>The Complaints Policy is not the right route for some matters, such as staff grievance, but in all cases of complaint or grievance there is a correspondingly clear and structured route through which it can be addressed.</p>	<p>The School will always look to informal resolution and there is evidence that this approach works because the incidence of formal complaint is not significantly high.</p> <p>The School's Complaints Policy is designed to be a fair and transparent process open to all, encouraging resolution by informal means. It is meant to ensure that all those who complain are treated fairly, consistently, efficiently and effectively. Advice was taken on constructing a fair and effective policy.</p> <p>The School uses information from concerns and complaints to improve its future practice and service.</p>
	<p>How we monitor & review it</p> <p>There is now a Girls Lead to manage their needs as their numbers grow and the students' grow up. Student surveys are part of the current boarding house inspection programme.</p> <p>Student voice is being used in gathering thoughts about prep and curriculum development for example.</p> <p>We have celebrated cultural festivals, thematic days and national events such as Chinese new year with decorations and food, fun Valentine's day cakes and a spooky Halloween, a Jubilee street party, the Coronation and international women's day.</p>	

Equality Objectives

The School's Equality & Diversity Policy outlines the commitment of staff, students and the Governing Body to ensure inclusion and equality of opportunity. We consider this to mean more than treating everybody the same and that it extends to understanding and tackling the difficult barriers that could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of students in the School, whilst celebrating the uniquely rich and diverse community we have here.

It is in this context that we have thought about what should be the School's Equality Objectives. We have never been afraid of addressing important issues and addressing them well rather than spreading our aims thinly across more and we will continue to do this. This is not to say that because something is not an objective that it is ignored or side lined; it is not, they form part of the everyday requirement of caring for and teaching students in this School and will be dealt with as needed.

In looking at specific areas we have been mindful of two recent key events:

- The covid years and their legacy both in terms of 'lost' learning and impact on mental health, and
- The momentous decision to change more than 350 years of tradition and admit girls from Year 7 and for them to also be able to board.

And we have chosen:

- Attendance and the need to break down the barriers to coming to school so that students can benefit most from their education and gain full advantage from the range of opportunities available to them, both inside and outside the classroom.
- The hugely important and ongoing concern of how we can deal with mental health issues and support students who are concerned or distressed in this way.
- The successful integration of girls into what has historically been a boys school and understanding the concerns and worries of both the girls and the boys.

Attendance

It is commonly accepted that regular school attendance is the key to students maximising the educational and wider opportunities available to them both inside and outside the classroom and that irregular attendance undermines this and can lead to students falling behind in their studies. As school's re-opened after lockdown, we saw children begin to return to their lessons and staff return to start to find out where children's education had got to and to deliver education. They all faced challenges, periods of being unwell, staff shortages, disrupted learning and having to settle back into routines. Some found it difficult to return and we have all had to work to break down the barriers that were preventing children coming to school whether it was phasing a return, finding counselling or simply offering individual support. What was clear was that what is 'right' for one child did not always work for another. And whilst we faced and met the challenges of absenteeism following the pandemic we then found ourselves confronted by increasing absenteeism for a whole range of other reasons, some of which might indicate safeguarding concerns, mental health concerns or for other reasons.

Historically, absence in this school has been, low reflecting the nature of a boarding school, but with a growing intake of day pupils, or those not boarding full time, we have seen absenteeism

increase. Our levels of absence are still below statistics published nationally and locally but nevertheless less they are higher than we would hope for them to be.

We know there is clear advantage to be gained by attending lessons. Poor attendance was identified in analysing the results of those who significantly underperformed in examinations confirming it. And we have actively followed up children not in school, liaising with parents and speaking with students. So we must look to refresh our approach and that is what we intend to do. We will be raising the profile of absenteeism, making this a strategic focus and redefining roles and responsibilities with the expectation of improving school and lesson attendance.

We will:

- Bring attendance under the welfare banner.
- Monitor patterns in attendance, achievement, welfare, behaviour and discipline and draw conclusions from the data to formulate appropriate responses.
- 'Red flag' absentees to be investigated by a safeguarding officer.

Dealing with Mental Health

This objective carries over from our previous objectives and we make no apology because it is an important and growing issue in terms of both the number of cases and also the complexity of them.

The published aims of the School recognise that *'above all, we aim to provide a uniquely stimulating and supportive environment in which all individuals flourish, grow in understanding, self-confidence and self-esteem and are fully equipped to meet the challenges and demands of life beyond school'*. Yet achieving this is set against a widely reported background of growing pressures on young people and nationally recognised increasing mental health concerns so much so that mental health has been expressed by the Prime Minister in 2017 as one of the 'greatest social challenges of our time'.⁷ Nothing would seem to have changed, indeed the pandemic from 2020 significantly added to it and we see more and more reports being made to the safeguarding team on these grounds.

We will continue to expect all of our students to aspire to excellence, to aim high and to make a positive contribution but we must do so in a caring and nurturing way which respects individual needs and provides a framework of support where it is required.

To do this we will promote mental wellbeing by:

- Developing a wellbeing policy bringing together our existing policies and good practices in supporting young people.
- Continuing to raise awareness and speaking openly about mental health issues and the need to address them.
- Making sure that staff are able to recognise and react appropriately to signs of distress and concern.
- Maintaining and monitoring our safe, secure, happy and healthy environment.
- Identifying students' specific mental health needs and finding the support they need to go forward.
- Encouraging emotional resilience.
- Appointing a mental health lead who is supported by a trained mental health committee.

⁷ Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and the Rt Hon Theresa May MP(2017) 'The shared society: Prime Minister's speech at the Charity Commission annual meeting' 9 January 2017

Integration

The admission of girls into the lower school and as boarders came at a very challenging time following the pandemic so it was creditable, requiring not an insignificant amount of effort from staff, students and parents, that the first two intake years happened and went well. The School had put a good deal of effort into meeting with boys beforehand, listening to their concerns and addressing gender bias/perceptions so that they could feel comfortable with the changes that were coming. And this has continued as, inevitably, adjustments were needed as they became apparent. The girl cohort was small in the early stages and supported by an integration lead. As numbers have increased and girls are settling in the school, we find ourselves still having to consider the equality of provision for girls and whilst it has and will take time to build up resources to meet all of this we would look to:

- Consider additions to the curriculum, for example drama and dance
- Widen our provision of Art facilities
- Consider the range of sporting facilities we can offer
- Identify further boarding house capacity

We will of course also continue to be aware of the potential for trends to develop for making misogynistic comments for example and for inappropriate use of social media and a girl's lead has been appointed to support our aims.

Monitoring and Reporting Progress

The Governing Body will regularly monitor progress and delivery of these objectives through their Committees and we will be reporting back at intervals, through this area of the website, on how we are getting on with meeting the goals we have set ourselves.

March 2024