

Equalities Report – April 2024

Objective 1

1. To ensure the curriculum prepares students for life in modern Britain, reflects the diversity of the community and is fully inclusive. This will be measured by on-going review by LT and Heads of Faculty.

Extensive work has been done in faculty teams on the diversity of the curriculum. There is greater awareness across the school when creating teaching resources, that they reflect diverse positive role models for the whole of the Sheldon community and beyond. Particular faculties of note are English, history, PSRE and the tutor programme who were all a focus for the audit conducted by Representation Matters.

The audit showed that in English for example, the selection of poets chosen for unseen poetry provides a range of voices, with an equitable split between poets who are racialised as white and those of the global majority. Similarly, there is an equitable split between gender representation of the groups. The curriculum explores the notion of unconscious bias in texts it approaches and more work is to be done in this area. Missed opportunities were highlighted to the HOF and are being addressed such as the use of imagery and how this may be triggering to young people or may perpetuate negative stereotypes. Work is being done to ensure that students are prepared for texts that focus on racial injustice such as Noughts and Crosses.

As a result of suggestions raised in the audit, the history lead has removed impactful images from the booklets of work and teachers have structured, individual conversations with students ahead of units such as the Transatlantic Slave Trade, providing pastoral support where needed. Parental feedback has been extremely positive about this. The year 7 African Kingdoms unit has been moved to year 7 and the focus is on celebration of art and culture and not about persecution thus changing the perspective from negative to positive. In 6th form teaching, text books are used in an objective way and terms like 'The Blacks' and 'Indians' are challenged allowing for debate amongst students and staff. The faculty are benefitting from resources produced by Cargo Classroom.

In PSRE, there is a wide range of opportunities to explore culture and diversity with a range of family types represented from the Year 7 relationships module. Respect, justice, love and equality are explored through Key Stage 3 with a range of voices used and challenging stereotypes directly. Representation Matters suggested that the lead create a faculty handbook to underpin references to key policies (RSE, EDI and Curriculum) to ensure the full scope and intention of the programme is clearly identified for all stakeholders. This will serve as a frame of reference for the department vision and ensure consistency of approach for teachers within the department and across the tutor programme.

Objective 2

2. To promote an ethos and culture in the school in which everyone is welcomed and respected as individuals whether or not they have special educational needs or disabilities, whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status, whatever their gender and gender identity, whatever their religious or non-religious affiliation or faith background and whatever their sexual identity. This will be measured through regular stakeholder feedback.

Returning to school after the first lockdown, there was an increase in the number of complaints from parents and students who racialise as black or Asian about incidents inside and outside of school. Some also reported a perception of bias from teachers in the way that incidents were dealt with, or worse, stated that staff did not respond adequately when issues were raised. There were also similar complaints and concerns raised by students and parents of students who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

As a result, the reputation of the school within these communities had deteriorated. CPD has been delivered to staff in relation to unconscious bias, prejudice and discrimination. Staff are becoming more confident reporting incidents via CPOMs. This puts pieces of the puzzle together and tracks repeat offenders. Following sanctions, workshops with the perpetrator are held to re-educate and this is proving effective to reduce further incidents. The circle of communication is being completed now by HOYs who feed back to victims, the resulting sanction so that students are aware of how we are responding and that we do not tolerate this behaviour.

A student inclusivity group was set up where student voice could be heard, issues raised, and actions taken on a whole school level to bring about change. A similar group for parents was established to create an open, collaborative forum where feedback on school policies and procedures was sought, taking account of lived experiences of parents and their children.

The new behaviour policy and changes to the anti-bullying policy have clarified the school's stance when incidents of discrimination occur. Assemblies delivered to all year groups by Representation Matters have been the start of a programme of messaging to students through tutor time and assemblies to promote the culture of kindness in particular to the protected characteristics. There is a concerted effort by pastoral staff to respond swiftly when incidents occur. Sanctions are applied in line with our Sheldon values. Work done so far in this area has been shared with students in tutor time and more widely via social media.

Reports of racist or LGBTQIA+ bullying have subsequently increased and while this might seem a concern, in fact, the evidence shows that students are much more likely to report incidents as they are confident that action will be taken. Encouragingly, some of the reports are coming from their white peers who are not prepared to be bystanders. A recent student survey revealed that **93%** say that Sheldon encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and treat everyone equally. Previously attendance of students within the global majority students was lower than that of their peers. Since lockdown, attendance of our black students increased from 88.7% to 91.5%, Asian students from 94% to 96.1% and Eastern European students from 86.9% to 95.2%.

Tutors are inputting student names on SIMS using phonetic transcription to ensure that those key relationships with teachers are established from day one and names are pronounced correctly.

Our recruitment now clearly states our values as a school and our commitment to inclusion. therefore, anyone joining our organisation is aware. 'We are committed to creating and promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce that better reflects our community. Applications are welcome from all suitably qualified candidates regardless of ethnicity, gender, age or disability. We particularly encourage applications from under-represented groups'

Objective 3

To strive to close the gaps in attainment and progress between students and all groups of students; especially boys and girls, disadvantaged students, students of colour, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Looked After Children. Review of school data, both internal and external, will allow LT and middle leaders to measure the effectiveness of our provision and of any intervention that is put in place.

The gap between disadvantaged learners and their non disadvantaged peers has closed for all measures when compared with 2022 and for P8, A8 and EM 5+ when compared with 2019.

	2019	2022	2023	Local	National
Number of students					
PP	57	43	55		
Non PP	220	205	220		
%	20.6%	17.3%	20.0%	20.0%	22.7%
Progress 8					
School			-0.27	-0.01	-0.03
PP	-0.80	-0.82	-0.82		
Non PP	0.09	-0.06	-0.15	0.13	0.17
Gap	-0.89	-0.76	-0.67		
Attainment 8					
School			44.5	46.8	46.2
PP	34.90	34.33	33.22		
Non PP	52.94	53.67	47.90	49.7	50.2
Gap	-18.04	-19.34	-14.68		
EM 4+					
PP %	49.12	39.53	38.18		
Non PP %	80.00	81.46	72.73	72	73
Gap %	-30.88	-41.93	-34.55		
EM 5+					
PP %	17.54	18.60	23.64		
Non PP %	53.64	58.05	46.36	50	52
Gap %	-36.10	-39.45	-22.72		
5 inc EM 4+					
PP %	40.35	30.23	38.18		
Non PP %	76.36	75.12	66.82		
Gap %	-36.01	-44.89	-28.64		
5 inc EM 5+					
PP %	17.54	18.6	23.64		
Non PP %	53.18	57.56	45.0		
Gap %	-35.64	-38.96	-21.36		

Middle and senior leaders were assigned as a mentor to 28 disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 to support them with revision planning, organisation, general wellbeing, and exam preparation. All but one student increased their P8 score from the mocks to the summer exams. The average increase of P8 was +0.57.

Attainment and outcomes have also been reviewed through the lens of race and the headline results for each are given below. There are a number of students for whom ethnicity information has been withheld and those figures do not appear with those below.

	White	Black	Asian	East European
Number	227	12	4	3
P8	-0.32	-0.09	+0.47	+1.89
A8	45.01	38.42	49.38	48.33
EM 4+	66.5%	50%	75%	67%
EM 5+	44%	25%	50%	33%
5 9-4 Inc EM	61.7%	50%	50%	66%
5 9-5 Inc EM	42.7%	25%	50%	33%

	Non SEND	SEND E	SEND K
Number	251	9	15
P8	-0.21	-0.74	-0.87
A8	46.53	26.94	29.58
EM 4+	68.9%	33%	33%
EM 5+	43.8%	11%	27%
5 9-4 Inc EM	63.75%	33%	33%
5 9-5 Inc EM	42.7%	11%	13%

During 2022-23 there was an increased effort to closely track and monitor attendance of students and particularly those designated as disadvantaged and with SEND. Fortnightly data updates were shared with Year heads and their tutor teams so that early interventions could be put into place. More Student Attendance Meetings have been held and more Local Authority Attendance meetings have been carried out as a result. The member of the LT who has oversight for attendance tracking and interventions has regular meetings with the EWO and where appropriate multi agencies forums are utilised. Attendance is improving and persistent absence is decreasing as a result of these targeted interventions.

	2021/22	2022/23	Year to Nov 2023/24
% Attendance PP	78.9	80.1	81.4
% Attendance Non PP	90.3	91.3	92.4
% Attendance SEND (EHCP)		79.9	86.6
% Attendance Non SEND		90.6	91.4
% Persistent Absence (<90%)	33.2	31.8	28.3

Objective 4

To ensure that all students are given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the life of the school, particularly focusing on developing leadership opportunities for all students. This will be measured by tracking participation by different groups of students.

Student leadership and involvement in the wider school community continues to be valued and rewarded. Students have had opportunities to represent the school in sporting activities, open evenings, school performances, as prefects and senior students, on school council and through participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. While in some areas of school life, participation data is recorded, it is not yet collated for all activities. This is a focus in 2023-24 so that more students can be encouraged to participate in school leadership by ensuring we improve the range of opportunities available to meet the need and interests of our students.

In respect to the protected characteristics, year 11 student prefects have a working group for diversity and have fed into some of the aspects mentioned in this report. Students in year 9 are involved in a project to replace the ZT (Zero Tolerance) commitment with something designed by students and signed by students which will be displayed above the hall. There is a plan in place for Year 12 students of colour to act as mentors for younger students of colour. This is for students who have been identified as needing support from a role model and peer.

Objective 5

To ensure that all staff are aware of and follow the school's Equality Policy and that staff recruitment complies with the Equality Act 2010. This will be measured through effective staff induction and CPD and by timely review of the policy.

Recruitment complies fully with the Equality Act 2010. Sheldon is now a flexible working school and this information is included with all adverts. Positive Action statements are included in all adverts to encourage under represented sections of the school community to apply (text above).

Applications are 'blind' to ensure that selection for interview is based on merit and removes any element of bias.

CPD for staff was made a priority on the TD day in September covering the Equality Act and training provided for ITT students joining the school. Middle leaders have received training on how to create an inclusive community and how to respond to prejudicial incidents. Regular reminders to staff about reporting via CPOMs are made in briefing and at all staff meetings. The Equalities policy was included in the material staff read ahead of the academic year.

Objective 6

To routinely review accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas.

Staff and students who cannot access teaching areas are timetabled in downstairs classrooms where possible. Parents evenings offer face to face venues that are accessible and meeting rooms for scheduled parent meetings are located downstairs.

An increasing number of classrooms are soundproofed to create an inclusive environment for our deaf students. The use of soundfield technology is embedded throughout the school and was highlighted as a strength by inspectors.

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