

## Barr Beacon School Equality objectives 2023-27



The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) expects schools to pay due regard when making decisions that affect pupils and staff with protected characteristics. As stated in the 2010 Equality Act, these are: race, disability, sex, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

Specifically, schools must pay due regard to the need to

- a. **eliminate discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b. **advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. **foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Matrix Academy Trust's mission is 'Education Without Exception'. Equality is at heart of everything we do. While every school shares this overarching ethos, each school identifies its own objectives based on an incisive knowledge of their context and the specific needs of their pupils and staff.

Barr Beacon School's values are as follows.

Behave responsibly

**Equal to everyone**

Act responsibly

Consideration for others and the environment

Own what you do

**Never discriminate**

We have aligned our equality objectives with two of these values specifically.

### Review of Equality Objectives – October 2024

**Objective 1: Equal to everyone** Currently, some subjects have an imbalance when it comes to sex and gender. For instance, girls tend to choose caring subjects such as health and social care and there are more boys who choose physics. We are therefore setting ourselves the objective of shattering stereotypes to promote equality of opportunity. To do this, we will increase the visibility of people who challenge the stereotypes still pervasive in society, including selecting visiting speakers who do this. We will actively seek to employ staff who counter these stereotypes too. We will ensure PSHE materials counter stereotypes right from Year 7. Throughout our careers programme, we will also be careful not to indirectly put pupils off choosing certain professions by using gendered language. Where gendered language is a part of the vernacular, e.g. chairman, we will highlight this, educating pupils on the history of this language and promoting use of alternatives, e.g. chairperson.

Our equality objectives are integrated within our school development plan and are reviewed throughout the year. Progress has been made in the following key areas in relation to the first objective:

- The Barr Beacon and Me module of PSHE contains roles models from a wide variety of denominations, faiths, ethnic, racial, sexual and intersectional identities.
- Our curriculum provides equal opportunities and is accessible for all and during the options process all pupils are exposed to all subjects.
- We use assemblies to challenge assumptions about gender and equality including International Women's Day, Disability Awareness Day and National Careers Week.
- We have range of aspirational public speakers selected to promote and inspire equality of opportunity.

#### **In careers we**

- Use Alumni volunteers in our Careers Events to allow pupils to see themselves in aspiring pathways
- Careers PSHE lessons in Key Stage 3 focuses on Careers Stereotypes
- Work on targeted programmes to address stereotyping e.g. Loughborough girls in STEM residential, Exeter Scholars programme for BAME students and we have a Digital Mentoring programme running next year for girls
- When selecting pupils to participate in careers events in stereotypical roles, we actively try to select pupils who wouldn't usually sign up e.g. girls unsure about their career were chosen for a HS2 STEM project.

**Objective 2: Never discriminate** While our regular pupil voice and behaviour logs show discrimination to be very rare in school, we know that there has been a significant increase in hate crime in wider society (source: Association of Police and Crime Commissioners). As a school, we serve a community and have a responsibility to ensure our pupils are upstanding citizens in modern Britain. We are therefore setting ourselves the objective of pre-emptively tackling prejudice (keeping discrimination low in school) while also giving pupils the knowledge they require to challenge discrimination out of school. To this end, we will be constantly updating our curriculum to be both a 'mirror' which is reflective of the pupils in school and a 'window' into the lives of people with the full range of protected characteristics.

- Our curriculum is regularly reviewed and developed by professionals who ensure our pupils 'see themselves' in their subjects.
- Pupil voice is used to ascertain views and ensure that pupils feel listened to and valued including School Council, Anti-bullying Representatives, Beacon Values Representatives, Wellbeing Ambassadors, pupil Listening events.
- Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 is engrained within our PSHE programmes, assembly programme and across the school.
- Pupils who are in breach of the Equality Act reflect on this with an Equality booklet and restorative conversations.  
Programmes are in place in the Wellbeing Hub to re-educate pupils where needed on certain attitudes.
- We are conscious of the news and media so that we can always be responsive to what our pupils are exposed to and do this through our personal development curriculum.
- Our behaviour curriculum explicitly teaches pupils how to conduct themselves in a way that promotes success, confidence, resilience and ensures that they make positive choices.