



## Equality work at LSA

At Lytham St Annes High we aim to develop citizens who embody our values of Aspiration, Endeavour, Integrity and Respect. We believe firmly that ensuring an equality of opportunity for every member of our learning community is at the heart of each of those values.

Since 2019/20 we have had a keen focus on equality, diversity and how we can empower our students to have both the knowledge and skills to dispel the myths that fuel discrimination. This work began with the forming of the Equality Strategy Group. In its infancy in 2019 this group included staff in all areas of school, both teaching and nonteaching, our librarian, parents and governors. In 2020 a students' group was formed. In 2021 these groups merged and are working together on our next 3 year plan.

In 2019/20 we decided upon four key focus areas.

1. **To develop a deeper and honest understanding of what our pupils experience** of discrimination is/was within school and in the community

What forms of discrimination do our pupils experience in school? How do we know? How openly do we seek this information?

How easy is it for pupils to report incidents of racism, religious intolerance, homophobia etc? How should we adapt our current processes to make improvements?

How well do our children understand racism or wider discrimination?

How do we support, challenge and educate pupils involved in incidents of discrimination (including bystanders)?

*The committee drew up a **questionnaire**\* that explored not only what pupils experienced and witnessed but also how often were issues of discrimination reported? How effectively were issues dealt with? This was completed in July of 2020.*

2. **To examine our curriculum.**

Where were the opportunities to go deeper? To explore how our subjects can make the links between the curriculum content and conclusions that can be drawn, that explicitly challenge ignorance and those myths and misconceptions that support racism, homophobia etc. We reflected on current thinking and where we were truly exploring "*the best of what had been thought and said*". Did we only have a very narrow celebration of human success and the key individuals behind major developments?

The Equality Strategy Group included the Heads of English, Science and History who supported us in this early curriculum focus.

3. **Training and support**

**We are committed to investing in our staff and pupils**

What training do staff need? (Prevent, Anti-Racist Education training etc.)

How do we support staff and pupils to be able to confidently engage in open conversations and to challenge discrimination?

How do we effectively equip our pupils with the skills to reject being a bystander?

#### 4. More than Grades

We are committed to providing our pupils with a range of opportunities and experiences to prepare them for life in a diverse world.

How do we support our pupils in understanding and experiencing diversity? How do we develop partnerships with other more diverse schools?

How do our events, choice of speakers, the Literature Festival etc. contribute to a wider understanding of the world than a narrow Fylde coast experience?

How can we provide aspirational role models through our alumni etc.?

#### The Questionnaire\*

Over 925 pupils completed the questionnaire on discrimination. Our findings showed that the vast majority of pupils at LSA had neither first hand experience nor had witnessed any form of discrimination. However the minority of students who had experience in either /both of these areas told us that often they allowed incidents to go unreported . We also found that students were often unclear as to what action school had taken after any reported incidents (unless they were the direct victim or perpetrator).

#### Impact so far

1. Students took part in two virtual discussions on equality during lockdown to involve interested young people in driving the direction of our work. The main focus of these was on tackling Homophobia, transphobia and racism.
2. A student Equality Strategy group has been formed and is in the early stages of creating a system of Equality Ambassadors across school to support the reporting of incidents. They have also requested an e mail address for reporting incidents of discrimination which will be developed and introduced to the whole school in 2021/22
3. History, Science and English have all made changes or developed areas of their curriculum. In History we became a Beacon School working with UCL on Holocaust Education for 2020/21 and have worked with The British Museum developing a unit of work in Year 8 on African Kingdoms along with other curriculum development on Immigration and Empire. We celebrated both Black History Month and LGBTQ+ History Month in 2020/21.
4. Over a dozen staff took part in training online with the Chartered College of Teachers and University College London and we connected with research schools across the country to receive training.
5. We launched a series of Assemblies on Integrity and Respect that included *Upstander* training and developed pupils understanding of all forms of discrimination, including what being “Anti Racist” means.
6. More staff and pupils joined the Equality Strategy Group in September 2021.

While the national lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 certainly slowed our work, our resolve and commitment remains just as strong. 2021/22 promises to be a year where staff and pupils at LSA will continue to develop the curriculum, wider school life outside the classroom, our practice and structures in school, with a firm belief in equality of opportunity at the heart of what we do.

In October 2021 The Equality Strategy Group are working together to write a 3 year plan for our Equality and Diversity work in school. This will be published within the Equality Policy by November 2021.

***Together we aim to ensure discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. We endeavour to become well educated, thoughtful and respectful individuals, able to articulate why prejudice and ignorance have no place in our community. We aspire to be confident citizens with the integrity to stand up for what we believe.***