

## Ensuring equality at Roundwood Park Report for school year 2015-16

Roundwood Park School fully recognises its responsibility to achieve equality of opportunity and treatment for all students in the school, and to guard against any form of discrimination. The school's policy and practice is set out in its 'Single Equality Scheme' which is designed to help ensure that the school complies fully with the **Public Sector Equality Duty** introduced under the Equality Act 2010. It can be read on the school's website and any comments on the Scheme and the way it is put into practice would be welcome.

On the face of things Roundwood Park School reflects the nature of the community in the North West of Harpenden where it is located, that is, with a substantial majority of the population of white British origin living in prosperous circumstances. However in reality the school community is significantly diverse adding to the richness of its culture but also with the potential for individuals or groups to feel themselves "different" or disadvantaged in relation to their peers. The school recognises this challenge and the key objectives of the Single Equality Scheme summarise what it seeks to achieve in response, that is, to:

- Enable every student to achieve to their full ability and equip them for adult life as valued and valuable members of the community
- Ensure that every student is treated with respect by the staff and by their peers and valued for their individual worth
- Ensure that each gender and every minority group and individual enjoys full and equal access to opportunities for advancement and fulfilment
- Take the opportunities that diversity affords to enrich the experience of both individuals and the whole school community
- Identify and address any evidence of inequality or negative attitudes.

The following snapshots illustrate what is being achieved in practice.

The last report outlined some of the measures in place to help ensure that students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds have equal opportunity to benefit from the extra-curricular 'enrichment' activities available in the school. The outcome can be illustrated by the increased participation of students eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant (PP) in educational visits; the following table refers:

Visit	PP Participation rate 2014	PP Participation rate 2016
Y7 Humanities day visit	77%	88%
Y8 Humanities day visit	41%	48%
Y7 whole school curriculum enrichment day visit	64%	100%
KS4 expressive arts residential visit abroad	50%	80%
Y7 residential whole cohort team building	73%	88%

The last report noted how PE department seeks to achieve equality of access to PE and sport, and to engender better understanding of disability. Drama department faces comparable challenges in a different context and responds appropriately:

- Girls are more likely than boys to want to take drama to exam level and to participate in productions. Responses have included changing schemes of work to incorporate more physical comedy and choosing more texts for study with male central characters
- Year 9 and 10 students study "Curious incident of the Dog in the Night time" which gives insight into autistic spectrum disorder and enables students to see the world through the eyes of one with severe processing and empathetic difficulties

- Year 13 created a devised performance, played to the public, based around the plight of refugees in Syria, set against British and European attitudes. As a sensitive and well researched piece it incorporated a detailed understanding of Islam and Christianity.

In seeking to understand the culture in the school it is notable that the students elected this year as Head Boy and Head Girl were both from ethnic minorities, with a Nigerian and an Indian heritage respectively. They describe their experience of the school in their own words:

Head Boy: "The amazing thing about my time in the school is that my ethnicity was never a big deal. I was able to be proud of my heritage and who I am, yet I feel this didn't affect the way people saw me. I have never experienced any negative or preferential treatment due to my race, and I'd definitely say that we are close to equality in this area."

Head Girl: "When I joined in year 7 I was one of the very few ethnic people at the school. However this in no way had a negative impact of my time here. Not once did I feel uncomfortable to have the heritage that I do but instead I felt that when learning about cultural things at school I was really able to be myself and the students in my class really took an interest. Now having both the head girl and boy at Roundwood coming from ethnic minority groups within the community I feel reflects the lack of segregation and instead equality at the school."

A further insight into how inclusion characterises the school community was given by a year 10 student who is registered blind. When asked how the school had helped her integrate into school life and how she coped with her profound disability her response was effectively that she wasn't sure why she being asked these questions. As far as she is concerned she is just an ordinary student getting on with her studies and enjoying taking part in school life, including running a music club for students in years 8 and 9.

While inevitably there are always students who are disaffected or who feel "left out", it is reasonable to conclude that again the school went a long way in the year towards meeting its declared objectives.