

EQUALITY DUTY STATEMENT 2017

Inclusion and cohesion are at the heart of the ethos of Darrick Wood School, its agreed values of respect, honesty and responsibility and its day-to-day practice. Equality of opportunity, elimination of discrimination and meeting statutory duties are most important to ensure the success of the School and, as a result, students reach their full potential.

The School has relevant agreed practices on appointments, behaviour and discipline, community cohesion, disability, equality and diversity, gender, gifted and talented, inclusion, race equality, special educational needs and staff development. These are fully and consistently implemented, are monitored on a regular basis and have a positive impact. All improvements to the School's accommodation ensure access for those with a disability.

Darrick Wood School is proud of its record in promoting equality of opportunity for all its students and staff. Students enjoy their schooling, show commitment and demonstrate happy relationships and their self-esteem is reflected in very high attendance (well above the national average) and exemplary behaviour. The School is vigilant in seeking out and eliminating any incident of bullying. There have been only two permanent exclusions in 2015-16 both arising from a serious breach of the School rules. Temporary exclusions are rare. Students are given ample opportunities to influence the School's decision making through a variety of school councils and discussions in tutor time as well as through personal, social and health education.

Success is also demonstrated by students' consistently high standards of attainment and the progress made by all groups of students e.g. higher and lower attainers, boys and girls, different ethnic background and vulnerable students. Inspection has demonstrated that the School supports individual students exceptionally well. There are no significant gaps in attainment for students of different groups e.g. boys and girls achieve very well at GCSE level.

However, the School has identified a small gap in the attainment of most students compared with those who are disadvantaged (a small number in receipt of free school meals). In seeking further improvement, the School continues to strive to narrow this gap in achievement for disadvantaged students, although they achieve significantly better than such students nationally. Monitoring data shows the in-school gap to be closing. Closing the gap is a key focus within the School Development Plan.

Recruitment of staff is based upon clear person specifications and selection is focused upon potential in this context and prior experience. As a result, the staff complement is diverse in gender, ethnic background, religious belief and age. Recruitment of a female deputy head teacher from January 2014 and a female assistant headteacher from September 2016 improved the gender balance of the Senior Leadership Team.

Professional development is a priority for the School in meeting its world class aspirations and in driving improvement. All members of staff (teaching and associate) have a staff development objective to consolidate and enhance their knowledge and skills. Teachers have both compulsory and optional training opportunities to meet their identified needs. As a result, training is available at all levels including that for newly and recently qualified teachers, aspirant middle leaders, middle and senior leaders. Success is demonstrated by the commitment of all members of staff and the outstanding quality of teaching throughout the School.

The relatively recently opened Sports Centre seeks to meet the needs of the local community for all age groups, female and male.