

## BELLE VUE GIRLS' ACADEMY EQUALITY INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

September 2024

### Vision and values

Equality and diversity are at the heart of our academy vision. We are committed to breaking down barriers to learning, and tackling all forms of disadvantage; we believe in the power of education to promote social equality and dramatically improve life chances. Our mission is to provide a truly exceptional educational experience for all.

The academy recognises, and welcomes, its duty under the Equality Act 2010 to take into account the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different parts of our academy community. We actively challenge discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation). The academy makes adjustments to alleviate disadvantage, by taking positive action to deal with particular disadvantages affecting a group because of a protected characteristic.

Everyone is highly valued at Belle Vue Girls' Academy. The academy is committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference and diversity. We work to create an inclusive environment, in which everyone feels welcomed, supported and confident about being themselves whatever their characteristics or background.

BDAT values are Inclusion, Compassion, Aspiration, Resilience and Excellence (ICARE). These are implemented at Belle Vue Girls' Academy through our character framework. During the pandemic, students across BDAT told us that while "we are not all the same, we all want the same chances". We aim to ensure this at Belle Vue Girls' Academy.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We consider that **equality** means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access for all groups in employment and regarding goods and services.

We consider **diversity** to mean celebrating difference and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences and by respecting this everyone can feel valued.

We acknowledge that equality and diversity are not inter-changeable but are inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed.

We consider **inclusion** to mean a sense of belonging that involves feeling respected for who you are as an individual or group. Inclusion involves feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others. In an inclusive culture, people feel that their contribution is valued, and their voice is listened to and respected. "Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance". *Verna Myers*

Our **Inclusion and SEND provision** aims to ensure that every student has equal access to participation in all aspects of school life. It seeks to raise staff awareness of the need for adaptive teaching to ensure quality of opportunity. The Children and Families Act 2014, states that a child has 'special educational needs' if they have 'learning difficulties' which call for 'special educational provisions' to be made for them.

### Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Objectives

Belle Vue Girls' Academy aims to meet its obligations under the **Public Sector Equality Duty** by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between those who have a shared characteristic and those who do not.

The two specific duties for schools aim to assist them in meeting the general duty. These duties require schools to:

- Publish information (which must be updated at least annually) to show how they are complying with the equality duty.
- Prepare and publish at least one specific and measurable equality objective no less than every four years.

We aim to provide the highest possible standard of education for all our students. The ethos and values of Belle Vue Girls' Academy reflects the commitment to fully respecting and including all members of our diverse community.

The following **Equality Objectives** have been set by the BVGA Local Governing Body and are implemented at Belle Vue Girls' Academy:

1. For employees and governors to understand the Trust's responsibility surrounding equality and diversity, and to be aware of current legislation.
2. To promote cultural understanding, awareness and tolerance of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our academy communities.
3. To actively close gaps in attainment and achievement between students for all groups; especially those eligible for Pupil Premium, those with SEND needs and Looked After Children.
4. To review the curriculum at all Key Stages so that it represents the diverse culture of society and encourages tolerance and respect.
5. To monitor the incidence of the use of ableist, racist, sexist and homophobic language by students in our academies.
6. To promote mental health awareness and develop appropriate interventions.

### **Schools and the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010**

Belle Vue Girls' Academy is subject to equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 as follows:

- Schools, colleges and local authorities are under a statutory duty to be proactive in the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities for both staff and students. This means they must assess the impact of their policies and practices on the people affected by them and take steps to remove any barriers that come to light where it is proportionate to do so.
- Schools, colleges and local authorities also have a statutory duty to foster good relations between people who share a particular protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Protected characteristics encompass age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Local authorities and the governing bodies of maintained schools, academies and colleges with 150 or more staff have a specific legal duty to annually publish information about the workforce which demonstrates compliance with the general equality duty.
- All schools and colleges in England, regardless of the size of their workforce, should publish equality information about their staff each year to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty, even where there is no specific legal obligation for them to do so. Multi Academy Trusts are also required to publish this data for all their academies.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

- They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people.
- They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability.
- They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

### **Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation**

Any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated at Belle Vue Girls' Academy.

- The academy vision emphasizes our commitment to breaking down barriers and tackling disadvantage.
- Our Behaviour and Welfare Policy defines bullying, including racial, sexual and homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying.
- Contained within the Behaviour and Welfare Policy, the academy's Anti-Bullying Strategy sets out signs and symptoms of bullying, academy procedures, outcomes and prevention.
- The Anti-Bullying Strategy is revisited each school year with pupils and at regular intervals throughout the year.
- Incidents of bullying will be logged on CPOMS by the Pastoral Manager and bullying behaviour or threats of bullying are fully investigated.
- The Anti-Bullying log records all incidents of bullying linked to the Protected Characteristics.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Pastoral Team Leader review all reported incidents of bullying on a termly basis to look for patterns, and evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.
- All forms of bullying incidents will be reported to the governing body at regular intervals by the Deputy Headteacher (Behaviour, Attitudes & Personal Development).
- The school is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions. Where relevant, our policies include reference to the importance of avoiding discrimination and other prohibited conduct.
- Sensitive and age-appropriate topics, such as the protected characteristics and challenging prejudice linked to them, are covered through the Personal Development Curriculum, which is delivered by form tutors to all year groups. This is enhanced through assemblies and by visits from external agencies.

- The academy's Protected Characteristics Improvement Plan outlines strategies in place to support each protected characteristic and they are measured through a termly Impact Summary Report.
- Our adverts and application monitoring ensures we eliminate unlawful discrimination in recruitment to ensure we employ staff from a wide background that reflects our school community.

### **Advancing equality of opportunity**

The academy vision states our belief in the power of education to promote social equality and dramatically improve life chances. Our mission is to provide a truly exceptional educational experience for all. We work to create an inclusive environment, in which everyone feels welcomed, supported and confident about being themselves whatever their characteristics or background.

As set out in the DfE guidance on the Equality Act, the school aims to advance equality of opportunity by:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people which are connected to a particular characteristic they have.
- Taking steps to meet the particular needs of people who have a particular characteristic.
- Encouraging people who have a particular characteristic to participate fully in any activities.

In fulfilling this aspect of the duty, the school will:

- Analyse student progress and attainment data in relation to groups with different characteristics to determine strengths and areas for improvement, implement actions in response and publish this information.
- Make evidence available identifying improvements for specific groups.
- Analyse further data about any issues associated with those eligible for Pupil Premium, those with SEND needs and Looked After Children, and identifying any issues which could affect our own pupils.

### **Fostering good relations**

The school aims to foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it:

- The academy is committed to creating a community that recognises and celebrates difference and diversity.
- The promotion of positive moral attributes of compassion, respect and responsibility and the competency of teamwork is facilitated through assemblies, the Personal Development programme and the wider curriculum.
- We foster good relations through the curriculum, including Religious Studies and Personal Development, but also through activities in other subject areas. The curriculum is diverse and enables students to experience a wide range of cultural activities. This is plotted via curriculum maps and SMSC/ Personal Development maps. The Diversity Improvement Plan provides specific detail on strategies employed within the academy.
- Enrichment activities foster collaboration and friendship between students, for example through activities such as team-working days and involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- We foster good relations with the local community and our students make an impact on the local area through volunteering and fundraising.
- The academy encourages and implements initiatives to ensure the involvement of, and collaboration between, different groups of students within the school. For example, our student leadership body is formed from students from a range of backgrounds. All students are encouraged to participate in enrichment activities.
- Our student leadership body includes Diversity Ambassadors and Wellbeing Ambassadors who engage in a range of student-led activities to ensure strong relationships between students.
- We have developed links with people and groups who have specialist knowledge about particular characteristics, which helps inform and develop our approach. For example, we have close links with Solutions Not Sides, the Anne Frank Trust and Step 2.
- We work closely with students from a range of different backgrounds who attend other schools, for example through our links to BDAT and our contribution to student voice initiatives such as Bradford Citizens, Citizens UK and Relationships Reset. We welcome students from other schools to Belle Vue Girls' Academy, for example the Panthalon event which gives young people with disabilities the opportunity to be involved in sport.

### **Inclusion and SEND**

At BVGA, all pupils are valued equally. Our curriculum provides opportunities for all to enjoy school, learn and achieve. Students who require extra support to access the mainstream curriculum, and students who benefit from alternative pathways, receive exceptional support from our SENDCo and a dedicated and highly specialist team of teachers and teaching assistants. All students are entitled to have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which is differentiated to meet individual needs. Within its aims, BVGA is committed to equal opportunities, with students being encouraged to achieve their full potential, whatever their academic or physical ability, through the provision of a balanced and challenging curriculum.

Students of all ages and all abilities will:

- Be treated as individuals where their individual needs, interests and aptitudes are recognised.
- Be entitled to have an emerging or evident special educational need identified and assessed.
- Be provided with opportunities for continued growth and development so that they can increase their self-esteem and become confident.
- Receive a balanced curriculum in both content and style of delivery which allow them to make informed choices as they progress beyond the Academy.
- Be encouraged to achieve their full potential, whatever their abilities.
- Be encouraged to learn through a range of enjoyable and stimulating experiences in an atmosphere where students feel valued, encouraged and safe.
- Learn to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning and actions so that they will be equipped to deal with life after school.
- Be encouraged to see education as a life-long process to the benefit of all aspects of their life.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

**All members of staff** are expected to:

- Work to achieve the Equality Objectives outlined in this document.
- Be aware of relevant legislation and guidance such as the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Assist in planning and delivering a diverse and inclusive curriculum.
- Ensuring that they are aware of and plan for all SEND students within their classroom.
- Ensure good provision and good outcomes for all SEND learners.
- Engage with such training as may be appropriate to realise the Equality Objectives.
- Promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos when undertaking their work duties on school premises and/or representing the academy in any other way.
- Deal appropriately (in accordance with the Behaviour and Welfare Policy) with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur, including accurate reporting and recording of such incidents.

The **headteacher** is responsible for implementation of this policy and for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are provided with appropriate training and support.

The **governing body** is responsible for ensuring that the academy complies with equality legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures are implemented effectively.

## **Involvement in decision-making**

Students are involved in a range of leadership positions (Diversity Ambassadors, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Form Captains, Academy Congress) which enable them to be consulted and play a key role in decisions regarding equality and discrimination. Student leaders lead assemblies on topics such as Black History Month and International Women's Day. Student Voice is taken on a range of initiatives and is used to evaluate strategies.

Parents have been involved in decisions regarding RSHE content, including topics such as bullying and mental health, via the RSHE consultation. There is regular communication with parents through Sway newsletters and the Twitter feed enables parents to keep in touch with school initiatives.

We have strong links with the local council, who have been involved in initiatives such as Solutions Not Sides and Bradford Citizens.

## **The gender pay gap**

The gender pay gap is an equality measure that shows the difference in average earnings between women and men. Gender pay gap legislation requires all employers of 250 or more employees to publish their data for workers as of 31 March 2021. Details regarding the gender pay gap can be found on the BDAT website.

**Please see the BDAT Equality and Diversity and BDAT Equal Opportunities policies for Trust-wide elements of equality provision.**