

EQUALITIES REPORT

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2019, The Trust Board reviewed the Equality Objectives set in 2018. In establishing its objectives, the Trust had acknowledged the lack of baseline data on which to measure its progress, and agreed that the Equalities Policy and Objectives would be reviewed annually for the first three years (that is to August 2021) so that the objectives could be refined and improved as data became available.
- 1.2 The Trust has a legal duty to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
 - Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- 1.3 The Trust's current equality objectives (set in 2018) are:

Objective 1

To promote cultural understanding and awareness of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our school community.

Objective 2

To monitor and promote the involvement of all groups of pupils in the extra-curricular life of the school, including leadership opportunities, especially pupils with special educational needs.

Objective 3:

To endeavour to ensure that the staff body and representation of staff in leadership roles is reflective of the local community.

Objective 4:

Each year, to close gaps in attainment and achievement between pupils and all groups of pupils; especially boys and girls, pupils eligible for free-school meals, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and pupils from different heritage groups.

Objective 5

To establish a culture where the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors in the school is seen as unacceptable by all members of the school community.

Objective 6

To commit to signing up for the Disability Confident Scheme and becoming a disability confident employer by August 2020.

- 1.4 Progress against objectives in relation to pupils has been reported regularly to the LGB, so this report primarily focusses on the workforce, trustees and governors. There is a short section which details pupil performance against equality objectives and summarises the latest progress data. (Section 7 and 6).

2.0 Workforce Data 2020

- 2.1 The last census data for Colindale was collected in 2011 and the population has grown significantly since that time from 18,727 in 2012 to 21,650 in 2015 and an estimated 31,005 in 2020. In 2011, Lanacre Avenue was included in the census data for Burnt Oak, but it is now part of Colindale which makes direct comparison difficult. The new school site is in Colindale so this is used this for comparison purposes in this report.
- 2.2 The Trust Data is taken from the School Workforce Return submitted to the DfE in September 2020, supplemented by an in-house survey completed in January 2021.

Ethnicity	SMAT staff 2020	England School Workforce 2020	Colindale 2011 (Census)	Barnet 2018 (ONS estimate)
White	72.8%	91.4%	40.06%	64%
Asian	12.7%	4.06%	28.91%	14.6%
Black	7%	2.2%	19.18%	7.7%
Mixed race	5.6%	1.3%	6.23%	13.8%
Other	1.4%	0.6%	5.59%	

Gender	SHS staff 2020	England School Workforce 2020
Female	72.4%	75%
Male	27.6%	25%

2.3 The age range data (taken from our own HR records in March 2021) is as follows:

Age range	Male Staff	Female Staff
Under 20	1.25%	-
20-29	10%	18.75%
30-39	7.5%	27.5%
40-49	5%	16.25%
50-59	3.75%	8.75%
60 and over	-	1.25%

The age range is skewed towards the younger groups – and is not atypical for a school. There is wide variation in staff age, varying from 18 to 63.

- 2.4 In comparison to the English School Workforce Data, SHS has a greater diversity of ethnicities amongst its personnel, but it does not reflect the composition of the Colindale community. To address the parental concern that pupils have to “See it to be it” we need to increase the number of male and ethnic minority role models, especially amongst teaching staff.
- 2.5 **Disability** – in January 2021 14% of SMAT staff declared having a disability and a further 16% are living with a long-term medical condition. In Britain 14% of the UK working age adults have a disability (source: Employers Forum on Disability). There is wide range of long-term health conditions and disabilities amongst the Trust staff.
- 2.6 **Sexuality** – in January 2021 14% of SMAT staff identified as being gay or bisexual. In UK, 2.2% of people identify as being gay or bisexual in 2018, 2.8% in London (source: ONS data).
- 2.7 **Religion** – in January 2021, of those members of staff who chose to disclose their religion, 40% declared that they either had no faith or were agnostic. 26.5% declared themselves to be Christian, 6% Jewish, 6% Muslim, 4% Hindu and 12.2% chose not to disclose. The last available data for Colindale dates back to 2011, when 50% were Christian, 21% Muslim, 14.3% no religion, 10.5% Hindu, 1.5% Jewish and 2% Buddhist. (source 2011 census)
- 2.8 **Staff Perception of Inclusivity** – In the January 2021 survey of SMAT in response to the question “Saracens High School is working to enhance its inclusivity, which 3 things would you change to make this possible?”, 53% of staff responded that there was nothing or that SHS is already an inclusive place to work in. The most common concern was the need for better wheelchair access and a lift, together with more toilets and rest areas. These issues will be addressed by the move to Corner Mead. Staff would like to see more diversity in recruitment and a better gender balance.

3.0 Senior Management (SLT, CEO and TBM)

3.1 There are 8 senior managers of which two are male (25%). One senior manager is gay (12.5%), one is mixed race (12.5%) – all other managers are white (87.5%). One senior manager is disabled (12.5%), and three have long term health conditions (37.5%).

One female manager is in the 30-39 age range, 4 in the 40-49 age range and one over 60. The two male managers are in the 40-49 age range.

3.2 As the school increases in size there is an opportunity to widen diversity within the SLT – see action plan in Appendix 1.

4.0 Trustee and Governor Data

4.1 The Trust has not collected ethnicity and sexuality data for Governors and Trustees. The data on age and gender compared to national (NGA) data is as follows:

Age range	SMAT Male Trustees and Governors	SMAT Female Trustees and Governors	NGA Survey 2019 (male and female)
Under 20	-	-	1%
20-29	-	-	
30-39	13.5%	4.5%	9%
40-49	32%	4.5%	23%
50-59	4.5%	-	22%
60 -69	27%	9%	23%
70 and over	-	4.5%	12%
No data	-	-	10%
Total	77.5%	22.5%	100%

4.2 Nationally the NGA reports that 62% of governors/trustees are female, 5.4% BAME, 6% disabled and 2.6% LGBTQ+ (2019).

4.3 SMAT and SHS is therefore unusual in having a male majority of Trustees and Governors and 59% under the age of 60 versus 55% nationally (but lack people in the 50-59 age range).

5.0 Current Blockages to Increased Inclusivity

- 5.1 Dr Stevens, Claire Edwards and I have spent some time reviewing why we have been unable to recruit more men and members of ethnic minorities. On the education side there is a potential lack of candidates (our own figures are similar or better than the E and W figures), but this is not a reason to accept the status quo. Our own review indicates a problem with the quality of application for many posts from members of ethnic minorities which prevents shortlisting when compared to other candidates. In schools all job applications legally must be by application form only (this is a safeguarding requirement) so we need to take steps that addresses this particular issue and in finding ways of supporting disadvantaged candidates through the recruitment process (see action plan below).
- 5.2 Similarly, as the school expands, we should recruit and train our own teachers so if we are seen to be an open and inclusive culture, we can support people from a wide range of backgrounds to achieve their ambitions. We need to promote the opportunities for staff to join the school as LSAs and when they have appropriate experience, to move into teacher training roles.
- 5.3 Senior managers remain committed to recruiting staff to reflect the composition of the Colindale community. We advertise using national and local websites and tweet details, targeting ~BAMEedNetwork and @WomenEdLondon. These tweets are picked up by other educational leaders and influencers. There is potential to build on this into community groups. Many of our support and site staff are recruited through direct emailing of parents and through the Barnet Council jobs website.
- 5.4 One option for widening the pool of applicants is to expand recruitment advertising to include diversity focussed websites. This would have cost implications and is unlikely to bring in more applications for teaching posts where recruitment is dominated by the TES (Times Educational Supplement – an online recruitment portal). The alternative is to encourage existing staff and SMAT stakeholders to use their own networks within minority communities (past colleagues, friends, social groups, religious affiliations and families) to market the job opportunities within the open and inclusive culture of SMAT. There is some evidence that this is already happening and we can build on this.
- 5.5 The key must be for the Trust to be seen as an open and inclusive culture, built upon respect. Everyone, regardless of identity, background or circumstance should feel that they belong in the Trust and its schools and have equal opportunities for promotion and career development and believe that they belong. Within the Trust's ethos and values everyone should be able to be themselves. There is a difference between diversity and inclusion - diversity is about the mix of people in the organisation – inclusivity is how that group works together. More prosaically:
- diversity is about being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.*
- 5.6 In preparing his paper I have carried out a review of recent literature on diversity and inclusivity. There are a number of different approaches and more recently criticism of earlier approaches such as mandatory equalities and unconscious bias training which have been shown not to work. In the study, "Why Diversity Programs Fail" (Dobbin and Kalev 2016) it was shown that mandatory equality and unconscious bias training can activate bias rather than reduce it. People rebel against rules to assert

their own authority. Any benefit of the training rarely lasts beyond one or two days, because the training does not motivate people to make changes. Put simply, blame and shame doesn't work. Better results can be achieved if employers ease up on control tactics. If managers are engaged in solving the problem with an expectation of social accountability, then this appeals to their fair mindedness and is more successful. Options that have been shown to work, in combination or isolation are:

- Targeted recruitment
- Mentoring programmes for career development (to include open support groups for minority groups and cross-cultural manager/employee one on ones)
- Self-managed teams
- Cross functional training
- Voluntary diversity and inclusion training
- Encouraging reporting of problems and informal mediation to resolve them rather than grievance and disciplinary approaches

5.7 Our aim must be to attract, retain and develop the widest talent pool. To achieve that we need to engage managers in removing barriers to entry and promotion, exposing them to a wide range of people from different groups, encouraging social accountability and requiring them to explain their decisions.

5.8 One of the areas for closer examination in future is intersectionality –that is people are often impacted by multiple prejudices: race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers. These identity markers (e.g., “woman” and “black”) do not exist independently of each other, but interact to have an increased impact.

6.0 Pupil Progress

Reports and detailed analysis of pupil progress, merits, incidents, reparation meetings and Fixed Term Exclusions by group, gender and ethnicity are received and reviewed by the LGB. The most recent data on progress as at January 2021 is as follows:

Table showing the average progress made by key ethnic groups – 2018 Cohort (current year 9)

	Students	% of cohort	Baseline	End YR8	Progress
BSOM & BAFR	29	19%	0.4	2.8	2.4
WBR	27	17%	0.3	2.5	2.2
ALL (except focus groups)	99	64%	0.4	2.8	2.4

Table showing the average progress made by key ethnic groups – 2019 Cohort (Current Year 8)

	Students	% of cohort	Baseline	End YR7	Progress
BSOM & BAFR	16	11%	0.4	2.1	1.7
OAFG	16	11%	0.2	2.1	1.9
WBR	21	14%	0.2	1.9	1.7
ALL (except focus groups)	115	64%	0.4	2.2	1.8

Ethnicity codes

BSOM – Black -Somali

BAFR – Black Caribbean

OAFG - Afghan

WBR – White British

7.0 Performance against 2019 Equality Objectives

Objective 1 – met

To promote cultural understanding and awareness of different religious beliefs between different ethnic groups within our school community.

SHS is established as an open and inclusive culture where pupils study a range of religions and beliefs through the RSE curriculum.

SHS celebrates significant 'months' throughout the school year, including Our History Month, Black History Month, Disability (or other abilities) Month, Them and Us Month, The Spring Festival. There is also a gender equality month and diversity month.

Objective 2 – partially met

To monitor and promote the involvement of all groups of pupils in the extra-curricular life of the school, including leadership opportunities, especially pupils with special educational needs.

Extra -curricula activities were suspended during lockdown and were only partially resumed in the autumn of 2020. When extracurricular activities take place, registers are taken for each session. All pupils take part in at least one of the wide range of activities each week, and some take part in 5.

Objective 3: - partially met

To endeavour to ensure that the staff body and representation of staff in leadership roles is reflective of the local community.

See sections 2 and 3 of report. In comparison to national educational workforce data the composition of the Trust workforce is diverse in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, disability and sexuality. However, in terms of ethnicity and gender the workforce does not reflect the local community, with a female bias and a predominantly white workforce. In other comparisons the workforce does reflect the community.

Objective 4: - met

Each year, to close gaps in attainment and achievement between pupils and all groups of pupils; especially boys and girls, pupils eligible for free-school meals, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children and pupils from different heritage groups.

Until lockdown commenced in March 2020 there was no widening of the no gaps between these groups. Girls entered the school with attainment slightly higher than boys, and this stayed the same, as did the very small gap with pupil premium children. Children with SEND (EHCP) were the group performed closest to their aspirational pathway, and so although their attainment was lower than other groups, they actually make more relative progress.

There are very few Looked After Children in school so it is not possible to analyse their performance as a group, but the individuals are doing well.

This information refers to the average attainment. While there are some fluctuations between individual subject areas, these are small, and balance to show no overall gaps.

Further assessment will take place at the end of the 2021 Easter term which should highlight any impact of the lockdowns on attainment, and show if a gap has opened between the disadvantaged children and those from more affluent backgrounds.

Objective 5 - met

To establish a culture where the use of homophobic, sexist and racist language by pupils, staff, volunteers and visitors in the school is seen as unacceptable by all members of the school community.

Day to day, any inappropriate language is challenged and not tolerated and all focus on the importance of respect. Establishing a non-judgemental, accepting culture is a core focus of all staff at the school. Diversity month, Them and Us month and Gender Equality months celebrated. LGBTQ+ allies group has been established as an enrichment club.

Objective 6 – not met

To commit to signing up for the Disability Confident Scheme and becoming a disability confident employer by August 2020.

Although this has been researched and plans made for implementation this objective has not been met.

8.0 How will we know if we have succeeded?

The dilemma of diversity

“..... every time I hear the “diversity” argument about boards of directors I cannot help but wonder if the chosen person is actually the best person for the job. If so, brilliant. If not, then someone else is actively being discriminated against and surely, that is even more wrong and may well result in many of the brightest and best deciding to try their luck elsewhere, where their efforts and skills are genuinely wanted and respected.”

Antony Wright, Letters to the Editor, The Times 27th February 2021

8.1 The Trust's Recruitment Policy lays down the following criteria for selection:

“1.1 Saracens Multi Academy Trust (the Trust) is committed to equality of opportunity in recruitment, selection, promotion and all other areas of employment. Saracens Multi-Academy Trust seeks to appoint the best candidate for each position. When recruiting Saracens Multi Academy Trust will consider:

- *Whether an applicant has demonstrated the necessary experience and personal capabilities that will enable him or her to fulfil the role successfully*
- *Whether an applicant has potential for development*
- *Whether an applicant is supportive of the vision and ethos of the Trust and is supportive of the Trust's educational ambitions and its core values of Discipline, Hard Work, Humility and Honesty.*
- *Whether an applicant has the ability to work successfully with his or her future colleagues and whether he or she has skills which are complementary to theirs*
- *Whether an applicant has the necessary physical and mental resilience to withstand the rigours of working in a School*
- *Whether an applicant is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children*
- *Whether the appointment is in the best interests of an individual school and for its future development*

4.5.3 Applicants must be selected against the criteria listed in the person specification and within the framework detailed in 1.1 of this Policy. Notes should be taken recording the basis of selection.”

- 8.2 I remain committed to the belief that the best candidate should be appointed to any role, whether to a new post, or a promotion – that is the person who fits the person specification best. There is a basic tenet – if there a gap in the skills base across the organisation in terms of knowledge or experience then how do we fill that gap? Do we train existing staff and volunteers (and it is essential that all staff and volunteers should have equal access to training and career development opportunities), or do we seek a new external input? To achieve diversity the skill comes in designing the right person specification, promoting the opportunity to the right audience in the right way and supporting the applicants through the process so they can fairly demonstrate their suitability for the post. To achieve inclusion requires building and maintaining the organisational culture that enables each person to feel and believe that they belong, enjoy their role and want to stay in the organisation.
- 8.3 When we can show that we are receiving first class applications and appointing personnel, trustees and governors from a wide range of backgrounds reflective of the communities we serve, each suitably qualified for their role and we can retain and develop those individuals then we will be succeeding in building the open and inclusive culture we are aiming for.
- 8.4 The Action Plan for achieving this ambition is detailed in Appendix 1, together with the proposed plan for recruiting two new school governors in Appendix 2. For many of the actions we will need a run in period to set up and train personnel, but the timescales are realistic.

Kate Alcock

CEO

17th March 2021

APPENDIX 1

ACTION PLAN FOR INCREASING DIVERSITY WITHIN SARACENS MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Measures Already in Place to Support Diverse Recruitment and Retention

1. Published Recruitment Policy
2. Managers trained in interviewing
3. Focus on values of Discipline, Honesty, Humility and Hard Work and repeated restatement of these values in everything we do
4. All permanent posts advertised locally and in relevant professional journals/websites.
5. Recruitment data includes salary ranges and pay policy
6. Use of structured interview format and scoring in recruitment, with decisions evidence based.
7. Standardised tasks for all applicants, relevant to role and consistently scored
8. LGBT + and allies group
9. Celebration of Our History Month, Black History Month, Disability (or other abilities) Month, Them and Us Month, The Spring Festival, Gender Equality Month and Diversity Month.
10. Wellbeing programme and champions, Mental Health first aiders in post and counselling available for staff
11. Flexible working arrangements available and used up to an including SLT posts.
12. Regular 1 to 1s with managers trained to have sensitive conversations with employees about their experience of the SMAT culture, encouraging employee openness and discussion of difficult and sensitive issues.
13. Aspirations programme for all staff – twice a year 1 to 1 discussion on individual staff development needs, mentoring and career aspirations. Investment in training.
14. Culture that encourages staff to raise questions with management.
15. Use of mediation where disagreements arise between members of staff.
16. Equality Impact Assessments as part of activity risk assessments.

Action Plan to Increase Diverse Recruitment and Retention

1.0 Focussed advertising (from September 2021 onwards)

1. Recruit from local teacher training and other colleges (including Middlesex University) with large ethnic mix to better reflect the composition of the local community.
2. Open conversation with staff to encourage them to use their personal networks to find and encourage applications from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences.
3. Working with local and London BAME initiatives to build profile and encourage applications from minority groups
4. Mailshot/email local community and religious groups with details of vacancies.
5. Participate in local community activities and media to encourage local people to apply for positions at the school (*"This is place where I would like to work (and where I'd like my children to go to school)"*)
6. To examine the cost effectiveness of advertising in specialist media for minority groups, for example Evenbreak, Disability Jobs, and The Voice.

2.0 Achieve Disability Confident Employer Level 2 by March 2022

3.0 Supporting Applicants Through Recruitment Process (from May 2021 onwards)

1. Include the following on with each advertised position on school website
 - Named contact with email address and phone number for people with questions during application process.
 - Detailed guidance on completing application forms
 - Link so applicants can ask for recruitment information in an alternative format e.g., large print, speech recording
 - Link to Recruitment policy and Employment of Ex-Offenders Policy
 - Link to ACAS guidance on employers making reasonable adjustments for disabled staff
 - All roles stated available job share or flexible working and invite returners to work to apply
2. Offer support during application, and before and during assessment
3. When inviting for interview enquire if applicant needs any reasonable adjustment to assist them through the recruitment process, underlining that we are an open and inclusive community who are positive about health and wellbeing.

4.0 After Recruitment (from May 2021 onwards)

1. Review of contracts of employment to emphasise that compliance with equalities law is mandatory
2. Revise equalities monitoring form and mandate completion by all staff and volunteers joining the organisation
3. Revise medical questionnaire to obtain greater detail of any medical conditions to facilitate design of personalised support
4. All new staff (not joining school in September) to watch induction recordings on culture and ethos

5.0 Building and Open and Inclusive Culture (from September 2021 onwards)

1. Embed living the Saracens values, importance of challenging poor conduct and reporting incidents (confirming in writing). Focus on building an open and inclusive culture built on mutual respect
2. Factsheet for all staff on health and wellbeing support
3. Expand in house training programmes for middle managers – including practical sessions on the right to manage and having sensitive conversations
4. Establish cross cultural/gender mentoring programmes
5. Managers engaged in problem solving become diversity champions
6. If staff and pupils wish it, to establish open membership minority interest groups (akin to LGBTQ+ and allies group).
7. Greater diversity speakers at careers events

6.0 External (from September 2021 when tendering contracts)

1. Encourage all suppliers to be part of Disability Confident Scheme