

The West Bridgford School

Reflection of Equality work 2020 - 21



“Diversity is the one true thing we all have in common. Celebrate it everyday.” - *Anonymous*

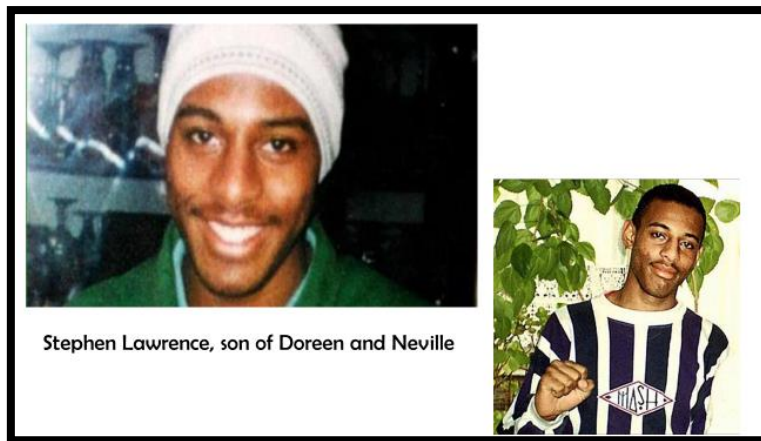


Culture and diversity is a deep rooted part of us all. Themes such as language, food, traditions, music, religion & belief, festivals, art, and dance are the very things that not only make us unique but also bring us together – sharing differences and similarities. These themes are at the heart of what makes our existence interesting, spiritual, expressive, purpose-filled, and meaningful, adding value to our identity and sense of belonging.

To help us all recognise the importance of this our school highlights culture & diversity-related themes with a variety of different events in and out of the classroom throughout the year. Fun is a big part of it, as is gaining an insight and understanding of our own and other people's cultures, traditions and way of life.

We create opportunities for everybody to consider what their attitudes and values are towards others, and how they can continue to positively contribute to the communities they belong to.

This summary outlines some of the values that underpin our equality work and highlights ways in which we celebrate our wonderfully diverse world.



Stephen Lawrence, son of Doreen and Neville

The seed was planted some years ago to develop our equality work in school. Many of you may have heard of Stephen Lawrence – a young man of 19 years old, murdered in an unprovoked racist attack in 1993. Stephen's murder was no different from many other attacks motivated by prejudice, but because his family campaigned tirelessly to ensure his case was investigated fairly, he has left a legacy.

We continue our work in the spirit of the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard and we remember Stephen. The heart of our work is about ensuring every individual in our school community feels safe, accepted, included, valued and able to thrive.

Each year we have a full equality action programme providing opportunity to learn about our world and celebrate it. This year, we have raised awareness about humanitarian, political and social issues affecting people in the UK and abroad. This is important to us as we believe the more society understands equality and diversity-related themes, the less likely we are to discriminate and judge.

Around the world we have been drawn into the pronounced visibility of protests as people unite against racism. The BLM campaign has been a pulsing beat throughout lockdown, and many people of all generations have engaged in the discussions and debates arising via various platforms. The emphasis has been on educating ourselves, not just listening to what we're told. A constructive and compassionate response has arisen. We do not merely have to hope for peace and unity. May we all be encouraged to consider, with sincerity, our part to play within our own communities and what positive action we can take. Maybe you could do the same as you reflect on our work too.

We stand up against all types of prejudice-related discrimination. We are all a part of our school community, regardless of

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Sexuality
- Religion or belief

We believe everybody should be treated fair and equal.

Taking it back to basics.

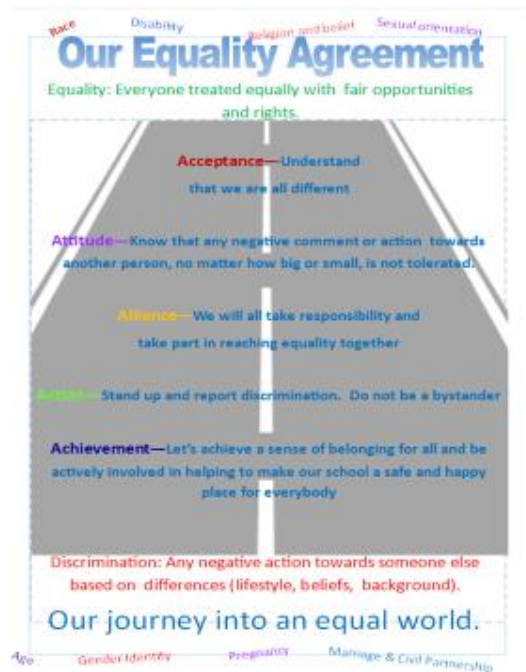
Prejudice is a preconceived opinion that is *not* based on reason or actual experience. This can often be seen in newspaper headlines or we may hear a person or group of people make hurtful or even hateful judgements about another person or group of people because they are different to them in some way.

Discrimination is the unjust treatment of different groups of people.

Negative actions can include verbal abuse, physical assault, exclusion, cyber-bullying, even gossip and spreading rumours about somebody. Some examples of prejudice-related discrimination are:

- racism
- LGBT+-phobic
- discriminating against somebody because of their gender identity
- ableism – discriminating against a person with a disability
- discriminating against a person because of their religion or belief

We share this in assemblies reminding pupils that everybody should be treated fair and equal.



We all come to recognise these documents - Our Equality Agreement and Anti-Bullying Code. Both are important and reinforce the message that we *all* work together to create a fair and inclusive community for everybody. These documents are a reminder to us all that every individual has rights as well as responsibilities. *Everybody* has the right to feel safe, included, accepted and able to achieve the very best they can in school...the right to belong. With that comes a responsibility to help others feel that way too.

Our Equality Agreement was designed by students. It's a pupil-friendly version of the Equality Act 2010.

Peer Mentors designed our Anti-Bullying Code, showing a clear definition of bullying and what is expected of our pupils. There is a copy of both documents on every tutor notice board, often signed by everybody in the group.

Some year 7 Pledges

I pledge to be a good sportsman and help stop bullying

I pledge to understand we are all different

I pledge not to make fun of people

I pledge to be kind to others and treat everyone as equals

I pledge to treat others how I would like to be treated

I pledge to never be a bully and make somebody sad. I will never be a bystander

In follow up to tutors talking with their tutor groups about Our Equality Agreement we invite our new Year 7 pupils to write a pledge to represent their understanding and support of what it stands for. Although a simple act, it makes a big difference as they have put time aside to consider how they themselves can take a simple positive action to help make our school community a better environment for all.

Above are a few examples from year 7. The pledges are based on kindness, respect, accepting we are all different and that is ok, and to not be a bystander.

That's a bit of info about some of our values. Now here are a few ways we acknowledged and celebrated equality and diversity during 2020 - 21.



*Martin
Luther king*



Rosa Parks



*The wind rush
generation*



Women at nasa



*Protestors during the
Bristol Bus boycott,
1963*

Black History Month

We joined the rest of the UK with our observance of Black History Month in October. This is an important time to highlight inspirational people – people who have stood for change, whose words and actions impact on society for the better, people who find the courage to stand for justice. Our school has highlighted this national observance for many years and learning continues beyond just a mere month.

Miss Phillips and her team delivered an assembly focusing on 18-year-old Guy Bailey and how his unsuccessful interview marked a turning point and showed that discriminating against someone because of the colour of their skin was still happening in the 1960s. Members of the local black community, supported by many of their white neighbours, led a boycott of the network in protest. The campaigners imitated the non-violent anti-racist crusade of Martin Luther King and other American advocates of racial tolerance.

The Bristol boycott was a key moment. Their efforts directly led to the UK's first ever laws against race-based discrimination.

Miss Phillips also reflected on previous individuals and events we have focused on over the years, such as Martin Luther King, The Windrush Generation and Women at NASA, as well as the work of footballer Marcus Rashford funding free-school meals, and Stormzy with his scholarship programme. All evidence that young people continue to make amazing positive changes to society for the benefit of others.

We are encouraged to acknowledge we have the capacity to *positively* influence our own lives and the lives of those around us. There are many different perspectives, and so much more we can learn from one another...if we listen.

Culture celebrations

Celebrating cultural diversity is one of many important parts of school life outside the classroom. These are just some of the countries and events we have focused on since 2013.

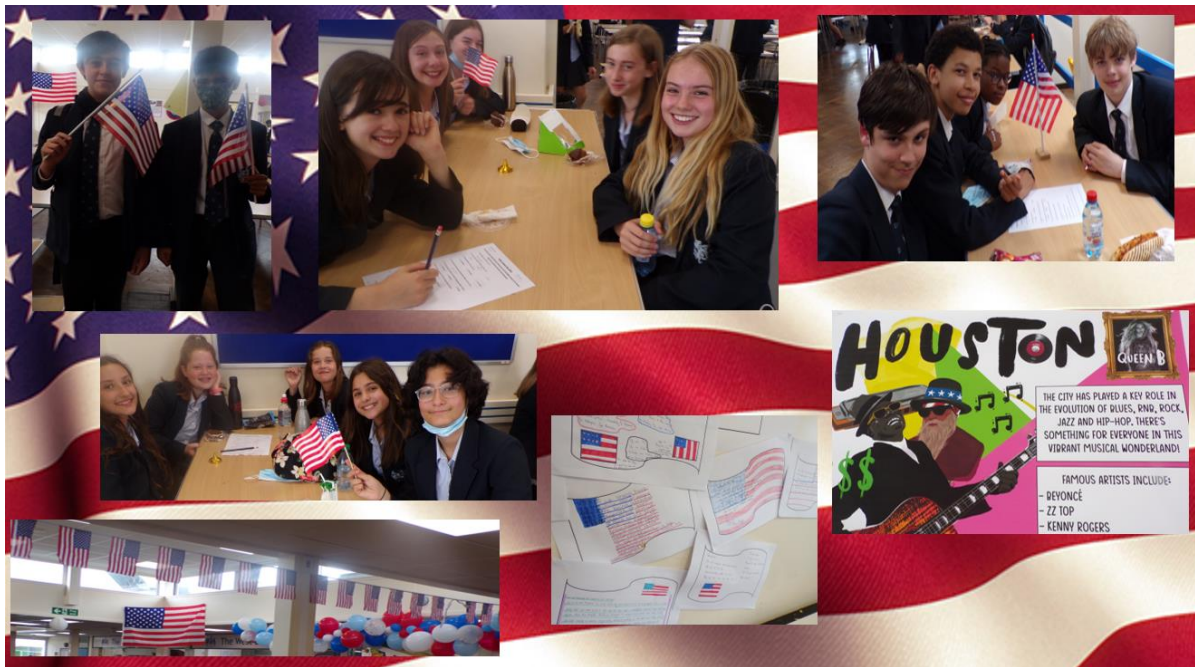
Culture celebration events



The countries we have focused on over the years have their own unique cultures and our celebrations have given but a glimpse. Pupils and staff get to enjoy a themed meal, the canteen is decorated with bunting and flags, music adds to the atmosphere, and pupils learn all sorts of interesting facts from the displays and quiz. And sometimes we add something a little extra special. For example, as part of our celebration of Japan, pupils and staff worked together to make 1000 origami peace cranes, with Haiku's written on the wings. Pupils also had a go at Ikebana, the art of Japanese flower arranging.

We were happy to welcome owners of a local restaurant business to share some wonderfully colourful elements of Thailand. The team served fresh Thai curry to help raise money for charity and shared the skilful art of fruit and vegetable carving.

We wore royal masks for the Queen's 90th Birthday, and welcomed the fantastic steel band for our Caribbean celebration. The list goes on!



Celebration of the USA

On Thursday 15 July, we celebrated aspects of the diverse culture of USA, our first full culture celebration in over a year. It was great to see pupils from all year groups, and staff, enjoying the celebratory atmosphere in the canteen during lunch. Something we've missed lately.

Staff from various departments contributed a mix of ideas, creative energy and time to help make our event a great success. We had a tasty menu, the canteen was decorated in all things red, white and blue, alongside displays shining a light on Native American communities and languages, inspirational people and popular culture, all of which led to clues for the ever-popular quiz. The music ranged from Jazz and Blues to popular rock and pop – a little something for everyone.

Different subject delivered engaging lessons, for example, English studied Amanda Gorman's poem *The Hill We Climb*. Pupils reflected on this and sought inspirations for their own piece of creative writing titled *The American Dream*. They produced some thoughtful pieces which are now displayed in school.



Although most of our students are continuing to study from home, we are still proudly flying our rainbow flag on the main school flagpole to observe #LGBTHistoryMonth 🏳️‍🌈

#LGBTHM21 🏳️‍🌈



LGBT+ History Month

As a part of our equality work we join the UK in acknowledging LGBT History Month during February, a month-long annual observance celebrating the lives and achievements of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people. This observance is important because it helps increase visibility of people, their history and lives; it's also a time to raise awareness for everybody, promote allyship, and create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ communities in schools and other institutions.

This year, staff and pupils in Year 9 – 13 contributed to a collection of profiles of inspirational people. Also, lessons were shared and the flag was displayed as a visible sign of support.



Poster competition – winning poster displayed around school (left)
Telling your story: work from pupils in English



Anti-Bullying work

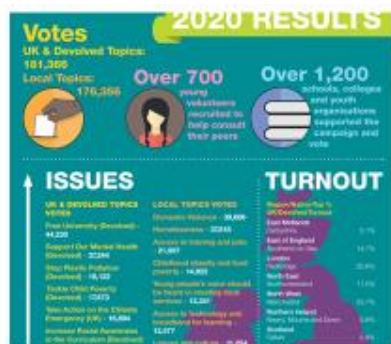
Anti-bullying work continues to run throughout the year and is often closely aligned with our diversity work.

In follow up to achieving the Anti-Bullying Alliance gold award last spring, staff continue developing the work. It's highlighted throughout the year. During a pupil voice consultation, pupils suggested we share what's going on behind the scenes. Here are a few tasks from our action plan listing ways our school takes a stand against bullying:

- Pupils fed back it is clear our school has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.
- There are multiple ways pupils can report incidents of bullying, whether a victim or witness, such as Year Directors, Pastoral Assistants or Tutors
- The online Report Bullying button, the 'I need to talk...' button, and signposting page are discreet platforms for students to seek support, share and talk. All are now well-established across year groups making it easier for pupils to access support as and when needed with greater discretion.
- Anti-bullying themes are often highlighted in assembly, for example, disempowering the impact of the term 'snitch' was a focus for one-year group last term
- Pupils took part in a questionnaire about wellbeing and bullying in school and the impact this can have on individuals in all areas of life. This feedback linked in to promoting support mechanism and putting preventative measures in place
- As well as sanctions for bullying, staff also do restorative interventions too

Anti-Bullying work continues throughout the year and the reason staff refer to it so often is because no community can thrive where bullying takes place.





The top 3 UK & Devolved Topics are:

- Free University
- Support our Mental Health
- Take Action on the Climate Emergency: Stop Plastic Pollution

Top Local Topics:

- Domestic Violence
- Homelessness
- Access to training and jobs



Pupil voice

Pupil voice opportunities arise in different ways and on different topics such as, such as Make Your Mark back in October, The Big Ask in April and Debate Week in May.

In addition, staff wanted to gauge how pupils were feeling when we returned to school in March. Many were feeling anxious about returning for lots of different reasons. Focus groups from Year 8 – 11 focused on school facilities, adjustments that work, and wellbeing. Groups were also asked whether they enjoyed being back and responses were overwhelmingly positive. Some of the things mentioned were:

- Being back together, socialising again, not just with friends but teachers too
- Having form time to talk and having face to face lessons again
- Getting back to a routine, a sense of normality, helps pupils feel motivated
- Having interactive lessons again such as tech, PE, science
- Feeling that everything seems more significant post-lockdown
- More support from lessons and general checking in from Year Director and Pastoral Assistants

This year has been testing in lots of ways but it's also been a year of recognising aspirations, the everyday things we sometimes take for granted such as friendships and having a sense of purpose, and how resilient we are.



Refugee Week

Refugee Week is a UK-wide festival in June. It's a platform through which culture is shared and expressed in different mediums such as art, music, food and film. Personal stories, voices and experiences are shared in creative ways, enabling communities to connect.

It's also a time to raise awareness about the stark reality refugees face, to shine a light on their experiences and challenge negative stereotypes and stigma.

Refugee Week is a bold, collective act of reaching out; a space for us all to listen, to exchange and connect. We can all make a difference by proactively contributing to help make our communities a welcoming and supportive space for everyone.

The theme of Refugee Week this year is 'We Cannot Walk Alone'. Although the week of reflection is finished, we can continue to use what we learn in developing right attitudes and informed opinions.

And finally...

All strands of equality are important. It would be perfect if we didn't need to raise awareness and we could all live in harmony as one collective global community. However, until every person is free from prejudice and discrimination based on their characteristics then there is always more to do. But we can also dare to dream that one day we achieve this as a collective. It starts with something as simple as having due regard for the feelings, wishes, or rights of others – the very definition of respect.

We hope from hearing messages of inclusion and learning about diverse experiences, cultures and lifestyles, our community will make informed opinions and have the intuition and courage to distance self from prejudice and discriminatory language and behaviour, and even the courage to be an upstander and report it.

One day, our young people will be in the world of work mixing with like-minded and different-minded people. Time in school is a good time learn, thrive, consider different ideas, respectfully debate, grow in confidence, and embrace diversity in the communities they become a part of today and in the future, and hopefully positively inspire others around them to do the same.

We encourage pupils to make their actions count, whether quiet or loud, subtle or bold, and whether they find it easy or challenging. Let's continue working towards equality for all, together, because nobody should be left behind.

We hope our summary has given you an insight to the good news that has been going on here at the West Bridgford School. We encourage you to find and share those good news stories and may you reconnect with the wonder of our magnificent world over and over again.

Thank you for reading 😊

"I became a culture and diversity ambassador in year 8. I wanted to be a part of the team who do lots of work to prevent discrimination of any kind, because it was, and still is, something I felt needed to be done. As I got more into the role of an ambassador for the team, I started to learn more and to have more ideas of what could be done. I started to help out with celebration days and assemblies and to help tackle prejudice-related discrimination throughout the school. Becoming an ambassador was a great choice to make, and it's had a big impact on my school life"

Year 11 student

We have a dedicated team of pupil culture and diversity ambassadors working hard behind the scenes, so a huge thank you for all the creativity, knowledge, confidence and compassion they share.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank pupils, staff, parents and carers for supporting our work throughout the year and for helping to make it such a success.



**“Kind words can be
short and easy to
speak, but their echoes
are truly endless”**

Mother Teresa

Miss Williams

September 2021