



Equality Objectives 2026 - 29 for Mercia Northridge School

Equality Objective 1

Aim to increase proportion of staff from underrepresented groups to 10%

Why we have chosen this objective

- The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Duty, which applies to all schools. It requires that schools must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the act.
 - Over 37% of our students are from minority ethnic groups. However, only 5.68% of our staff are from minority ethnic groups.
 - We believe that the ethnicity of our workforce should be more reflective of the population served:
 - Minority teachers serve as role models for minority students.
 - Minority teachers may have a greater opportunity to improve the academic success and positive school experiences of minority students.
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To achieve this objective we plan to

- Improve how we market vacancies to ensure an inclusive message is sent to potential applicants via images used and an explicit reference to welcoming applications from underrepresented groups.
 - Ensure interviews are offered to as wide a range of applicants as possible with scrutiny of applications from underrepresented to ensure if they can be short listed, they will be to tackle any unconscious bias.
 - Ensure new staff from underrepresented group are retained by ensuring a supportive environment through measures listed in the Anti-Racist School Award action plan including facilitating a buddy system for new BAME staff with existing BAME staff.
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Progress made since 2026

- This will be updated at the end of the year.
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Equality Objective 2

Close the achievement gap by ensuring there is no significant difference in the progress made by different groups of learners.

Why we have chosen this objective

- The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to all schools, including both LA maintained and schools.
 - Mercia Northridge School has approximately 60% of pupils from low-income families and so qualify for the Pupil Premium and a substantial proportion of our students are from ethnic minority communities. Approximately 30% of our pupils are on the SEND register.
 - In England, disadvantaged students are 9 months behind their peers in primary school and 18 months behind in secondary school (22 months for the most persistently disadvantaged students).
 - If the recent trend continues, it will take over 500 years for the disadvantage gap to close by the end of secondary school
 - Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) remain significantly behind their peers at every stage – up to 40 months.
 - Disadvantage gaps still tend to be larger, and growing, in parts of the North of the country – the largest disadvantage gaps at age 16 were equivalent to over 2 years of learning.
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- Post-16 destinations are increasingly segregated – an over-representation of disadvantaged students in further education, employment and an unknown or un-sustained destination and an under-representation in school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and apprenticeships.
 - Additionally, in 2020, the OFS reported that young people from advantaged areas of England are more than six times as likely to attend selective universities, including Oxford, Cambridge, and other members of the Russell Group, as those from disadvantaged areas.
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To achieve this objective we plan to

- Focus the attendance strategy to maximise the attendance of disadvantaged and SEND students ('vulnerable learners').
 - Improve the quality of teaching to meet the needs of these more vulnerable learners.
 - Develop strategies to ensure these students complete homework more.
 - Re-position the role of the Heads of House to ensure character, confidence and aspiration building work is targeted at disadvantaged children first.
 - Bring university visits currently held in Y12 also to Y10 students so they inspire disadvantaged children to work for GCSE grades that will allow access to level 3 qualifications and HEIs including an annual Oxbridge trip where high potential disadvantaged students will be taken.
 - Expand the peer mentoring programme and peer tutoring programme from sixth form students to disadvantaged lower school students to make better use of the relatable role models in the student body to help students aspire and achieve.
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Progress made since 2026

- **This will be updated at the end of the year.**
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Equality Objective 3

Ensure 100% of students participate in, at least, one extra-curricular activity throughout Year 2028-29

Why we have chosen this objective

- The Equality Act 2010 introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty, which applies to all schools . It requires that schools must have due regard to the need to foster good relationships across all characteristics, between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
 - Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to be encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. We want to ensure that every child regularly participates in at least one extra-curricular activity.
 - Research indicates that participating in after school programmes improves performance on measures of academic achievement. There is also evidence that there are wider benefits for low-income students in terms of attendance at school, behaviour and relationships with peers (Education Endowment Foundation).
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To achieve this objective we plan to

- Re-position the role of the Heads of House to ensure character, confidence and aspiration building work is targeted at disadvantaged children first.
 - Market the extracurricular offer more clearly through the PD curriculum to teach the benefits of extracurricular activities for developing character and soft skills that help with future employment and personal self-reliance as an adult.
 - Explain to new parents of Year 7 the expectation that all children will participate in extracurricular activities and ask for their support in encouraging their children to do so.
 - Provide 1:1 support from the IR and mainstream SEN department to accompany vulnerable children to extracurricular activities to help with confidence and access.
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Progress made since 2026

- This will be updated at the end of the year.
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