



Whitburn Academy

Equality Policy

Rationale

The council has developed, in partnership, a new [Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-25](#) that includes eight Corporate, Education and Licensing equality outcomes and mainstreaming actions, intended to address the most significant inequalities emerging from local evidence and involvement activities, with the greatest potential for positive impact. The council is committed to tackling discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and promoting good relations both within our workforce and the wider community. Mainstreaming equality is the process by which we will work towards achieving this as an organisation.

West Lothian's Education Authority outcomes are:

- Pupils have a greater sense of belonging and safety in schools
- Better mental health and wellbeing of pupils

Our objective in mainstreaming equality is to integrate an equality perspective into the everyday work of the council, involving managers and policy makers across all council services, as well as equality specialists and community planning partners.

Equality mainstreaming is a long-term approach that aims to make sure that policy-making within the council is fully sensitive to the diverse needs and experiences of everyone affected. The approach will help provide better information, transparency, and openness in the decisions we make about our services and resources.

Taken from West Lothian's [Equality and Diversity](#) website.

Our school's equality policy seeks to ensure that everyone regularly reflects on how they are advancing equality in their roles and settings, serving as a catalyst for positive change, equality, and fairness. It will encourage all to reflect on their commitment, activities, and culture, and on how to adapt to a continually changing and rapidly evolving society.

In taking forward our Equality policy, we continue to support the aim of creating a nurturing school where children and young people feel respected and included.



Introduction

This policy sets out Whitburn Academy's approach to promoting equality, as defined within the Equality Act (2010). It covers age*, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and gender reassignment. This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies and guidelines, particularly the school's anti-bullying policy, which should take account of the guidance in the [Promoting Positive Relationships policy](#). Our policy will set out how the school aims to remove barriers to learning for children and young people, both as individuals and in groups.

**(NB 'age' is also a protected characteristic, but not in relation to pupils of any age in a school).*

Whitburn Academy will adhere to the technical guidance on applying the Equality Act 2010 in Scottish schools, as outlined at the following link:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/technical-guidance-schools-scotland>.

Our School Context

Whitburn Academy is a non-denominational secondary school serving the communities of Whitburn, East Whitburn, Longridge, Fauldhouse, Stoneyburn and Greenrigg in West Lothian. Whitburn Academy currently has a roll of 851. 25.2% of pupils were entitled to free school meals. The SIMD distribution shows that 30.4% of our young people are in Quintile 1, with a further 24.3% in Quintile 2. Our vision for the school, our curriculum, and our young people is informed by the school's context and the wider economic context. Our pupils speak upwards of 23 languages and come from diverse backgrounds and cultures, with a range of beliefs. 55 of our pupils are EAL, and 48% of young people have additional support needs (see Appendix 1).

Aims and Values

The school is committed to providing equality and excellence for all, promoting the highest possible standards.

The core values on which the policy is based include:

- a culture of respect for others.
- promoting equality and social justice through compassion.
- a community where pupils are well prepared for life in a diverse society.
- A population of pupils who demonstrate integrity.

Whitburn Academy is an inclusive school with a vision to nurture a positive ethos that encourages all young people to achieve their full potential and develop as caring, respectful, responsible, honest, and ambitious citizens.

We are committed to ensuring equality and equity in education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents, and carers, irrespective of race, gender, gender identity (e.g., transgender), sexual orientation (LGBTQ+), disability, faith or religion, or socio-economic background.

We strive to build strong partnerships with all parents and carers and create equal opportunities for staff, pupils, and families to get involved in the life of the school. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identities and can participate fully in school life.

We aim to reduce barriers to learning by recognising every young person's individual needs. Staff are supported in their roles to develop and maintain the school's inclusive ethos. We recognise that pupils, staff, parents and carers have different needs, which may change over time.

We will endeavour to involve staff, pupils and families in our equality processes to encourage participation in our decision-making procedures.

This policy also recognises that inequality can result from poverty and neglect.

At Whitburn Academy, all staff will work towards recognising the barriers to learning and participation that this can cause, and collaborate with families, carers and pupils to build support networks and procedures.

Our School's overall approach to promoting Equality

Our school's Equality Policy provides a framework to pursue its equality duties as outlined in the 2010 Equality Act. This Act brings together pre-existing legislation and covers discrimination law in Britain, safeguarding rights.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

We will strive to take all reasonable steps to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations and positive attitudes between all characteristics and different groups.

Through the Equality Policy, our school will seek to ensure that no children and young people, staff, parents, guardians or carers or any other person, through their contact with the school, receive less favourable treatment. This includes the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act (2010), i.e., age*, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and gender reassignment (whether undergoing or having undergone). This does not mean that all learners should be treated in the same way: we may need to deliver learning in a range of ways to meet people's differing needs, so that all receive the same standard of education as others, as far as possible.

**(NB 'age' is also a protected characteristic, but not in relation to pupils of any age in a school).*

The school seeks to:

- promote understanding and engagement between communities
- provide opportunities to engage their communities
- encourage all young people and families to feel part of the wider community
- understand and respond to the needs and hopes of all our communities
- tackle discrimination and inequality
- increase life opportunities for all
- ensure that learning, teaching and the curriculum explore and address issues of equality and social justice
- be guided by
 - HGIOS 4- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
 - Breaking the mould: Principles for an anti-racist curriculum
 - TIE, LGBTQ+ Inclusion, [Working with boys and young men to prevent sexism and sexual harassment](#) | [National Education Union \(neu.org.uk\)](http://National Education Union (neu.org.uk))

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We are committed to promoting and teaching about children's and young people's rights, especially as Scotland has incorporated the UNCRC (2020) into law.

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/united-nations-convention-on-the%20rights-of-the-child-incorporation-scotland-bill>

Our Commitment:

As a school, our dedication lies in integrating equality across all aspects of school life. We prioritise change that is measurable, immediate, and carries a lasting impact. Our commitment extends to delivering inclusive educational experiences, ensuring diverse representations of individuals with Protected Characteristics are interwoven throughout the curriculum.



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Curriculum

Our pedagogical approach is anchored in a social justice lens. Our teaching philosophy incorporates the concept of "mirrors and windows". This principle highlights the importance of education, which reflects both the self and others' experiences.



Subject areas actively promote equality in our curriculum, ensuring consistency, breadth, and depth of teaching.

- The development across all subjects of the understanding that human identities are complex and multi-faceted, recognising the uniqueness and value of each individual, and disrupting ideas of “in-groups” and “out-groups”.
- By fostering connections among young people and the commonality needed to develop empathy. Championing their shared humanity to challenge oppression and confront the persistent inequalities in our society.
- On an ongoing basis, celebrate the normalising of diversity. Learning about role models, pioneers, and changemakers from the past and present ensures that young people see positive representations of marginalised groups and understand how individuals and groups have challenged and continue to challenge oppression and discrimination.

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- Explore fairness and injustice and their role in that. This helps them understand how power shapes the world around us and how to recognise and challenge it when it is used unfairly. This learning will move us towards a socially just, sustainable and equitable society.
- Learn about rights through rights and for a rights-based society.
- Develop critical literacy by engaging with a variety of texts and media, exploring bias, disinformation and misinformation. Reflect on their own biases, attitudes and experiences.

We will ensure:

- A comprehensive understanding of historical events like the Slave Trade, where we adopt an approach that considers the perspective of the enslaved. This involves personalised narratives, enquiry-based learning, exploration of its connections to Scotland's wealth, and an examination of the root causes of racism. This approach not only fosters critical thinking but also highlights African culture and empowerment.
- A recognition that stereotypes can take root early in a young person's life, we regularly review our curricular resources, equipment, and activities to eliminate biases that could reinforce stereotypes. This includes addressing gender roles and avoiding using outdated terms often found in older reading schemes.
- We recognise that merely a token representation in each subject can perpetuate bias.
- We understand that biases within the curriculum involve recognising the dynamics of power and control, where one group seeks to exert dominance over another. This often entails disregarding differences and attempting to erase similarities while essentialising groups of people.
- We are embedding the social justice principles that challenge dominant narratives, value marginalised knowledge systems, diversity, and foster connections among individuals. They entail examining multiple perspectives and critically evaluating whose voices are marginalised or missing.
- We have Zero Tolerance for Racist Language: Under no circumstances should the "n" word or any other racial slur be spoken aloud by teaching staff or young people, regardless of context. **The Scottish Government recommends this.** This language, and any form of racial dehumanisation, is deeply harmful and can and does cause trauma to those who hear or see it. As educators, we are responsible for creating a safe space where young people feel supported and respected. When using texts that contain offensive language, we ensure that our young people are prepared for its presence by discussing the material with them beforehand. These texts are only used with their consent and input as a group, allowing them to decide how to proceed. We are mindful

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of the challenges young people from marginalised backgrounds face in expressing discomfort in such situations. As part of our support, we promote safer and braver spaces. As staff, we are committed to continual education in racial literacy.

Please refer to the Scottish Government's guidelines:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/promotingraceequalityandantiracisteducation/guidance-on-racial-slurs-in-the-classroom/>

This holistic educational experience fosters respect and a deeper understanding of social justice and equity. It provides a sense of empowerment and pride to the young person, shifting their perspective away from powerlessness and toward looking to other people to enact change. It prepares young people for a more inclusive world by nurturing the desire to repair and rebuild a fairer society. Such an inclusive educational framework promotes critical thinking and empathy, which are fundamental for personal and academic development.

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Teachers use the following as a guide to planning lessons.

SOCIAL JUSTICE GUIDE TO AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

- This guide serves as a resource to create opportunities, rather than a checklist.
- It's important to avoid token representation, as it can reinforce biases.

Does the lesson incorporate examples or opportunities to highlight diversity across Race, Disability, Sexuality, Gender, Sex, Culture, & Anti-Poverty in a connected and meaningful way? Learning about historical & contemporary role models, pioneers, and changemakers to provide positive representation for marginalised groups.

Are a diverse use of images, prefixes, and names integrated in a meaningful and connected manner?

Is the language used in the lesson and resources inclusive and respectful, avoiding dehumanisation?

Is the contents of the lesson accessible of all learners?

Does your lesson allow young people to develop an understanding of lived experiences that are different from themselves?

Does all learners have the opportunity to contribute and share ideas from their own lived experiences?

What perspective does the lesson primarily come from? For instance, in an English lesson on "Of Mice and Men," young people could create diary entries from Crooks' perspective to amplify his voice and backstory. They could be challenged with the question of why his perceptive is missing? Incorporating books like "King and the Dragonflies" which explores intersectional perspectives.

Does the lesson build a global perspective? Does it include meaningful, connected contribution beyond Europe and America. The connections of what the young person is learning in the classroom to the contribution made across the globe.

Does your lesson provide opportunities to explore the effects of colonialism and its impact on prejudice and discrimination?

Does the lesson challenge learners' Misconceptions, Assumptions, and Biases regarding underrepresented groups?

Do you reflect on your own assumptions and biases, considering their impact on your lessons?

Does the lesson encourage the learner to ask why things are as they are? Investigate past and present events asking why there is a under-represented perspectives and stories.

Does the lesson give the opportunity to explore dynamics of power and social constructs, understanding and awareness of the behaviours, practices and processes that create injustice in the world?

Does the lesson encourage learners to see how there are connected?

Does the lesson facilitate the development of critical thinking skills in young people?

Does the lesson empower young people to challenge injustices and inequality?

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Language

Staff use other pupils' preferred pronouns and encourage the use of gender-neutral language; use vocabulary that is accessible to all, and give definitions when necessary.

We recognise that the diversity in young people's backgrounds, cultural beliefs, and religious practices is crucial. Acknowledging that not everyone observes certain holidays, like Christmas, and being mindful that activities such as creating Mother's Day or Father's Day cards may not be suitable for everyone are essential. Additionally, when addressing sensitive topics like the Slave Trade, care is taken to use appropriate and sensitive language to avoid triggering trauma responses. Young people are encouraged to support each other and use respectful language. Please see Appendix 1 & 2 of our Respect for All policy for more information.

In the creation of policies and letters, inclusivity is a priority. For instance:

- Letters and emails are addressed to 'parents or carers' to be inclusive of all family situations.
- Policies are printed on multiple colours of paper to enhance accessibility.
- The language used in all documents is written to be easily understood by everyone.
- Translations are provided for individuals with English as an additional language or potential impairment.

Ensuring inclusivity extends to all activities

Our extracurricular clubs avoid discrimination based on Protected Characteristics and promote mixed-gender activities to promote inclusivity and diversity.

Our events are carefully planned to be accessible to all pupils and staff, taking into account the various Protected Characteristics. The guiding question is, "How can this event be made accessible to all?"

Areas

We have designated areas that prioritise safety and inclusivity for everyone, particularly when considering a day in the life of our young people:

Toilets: Our toilet facilities are designed to be accessible to everyone, including gender-neutral toilets for staff and young people.

Changing Areas: We offer various spaces for young people, if required.

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Social Spaces: In communal areas, we ensure that staff members are always vigilant about how young people are treated. Any issues related to disrespect towards protected characteristics are addressed promptly.

Safer and braver spaces: Throughout the school, designated safer and braver spaces, including an upcoming diversity/faith room, are available. Our commitment to creating a safer and more inclusive environment is further reinforced through ongoing training for both staff and young people, which promotes a better understanding of the need for safer, braver spaces and offers clear signposting.

Student Voice

We facilitate groups dedicated to LGBTQ+ inclusivity, Future Assets (a female-focused enterprise competition), and Pupil Parliament. Additionally, we run regular focus groups for young individuals with Protected Characteristics who may not be involved in any of the aforementioned groups.

Religious Observations

We aim to provide an education that teaches knowledge and builds critical thinking, empathy, and respect. Our approach prepares young people for a connected world by focusing on:

Understanding Others: We help young people appreciate various beliefs and promote empathy.

Critical Thinking: We encourage open discussions that enhance intellectual growth and informed decision-making.

Tolerance and Respect: We stress the importance of mutual respect and helping young people become responsible and empathetic.

Balanced Curriculum: Our comprehensive curriculum encompasses diverse perspectives, preparing young people to address complex issues.

Parents/Caregivers: By involving parents/caregivers in the educational process and addressing concerns, we foster a sense of partnership and trust.

Confidence in Beliefs: We encourage young people to be confident in their beliefs while remaining open to others, aiding in the development of a strong personal identity.

Parents/Caregivers can withdraw their children from religious observation as outlined in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, see Appendix 2. Further details can be found in the "Curriculum for Excellence: Religious Observance Scottish Government Guidelines," also included in Appendix 2.

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Equalities calendar

Continue to use an Equality calendar to highlight local and global events. However, including these through interdisciplinary learning approaches, rather than as stand-alone lessons, is encouraged. See the calendar below.

<i>September</i>	Bi Visibility Day
	Carnival Day
<i>October</i>	ADHD Awareness Month
	Black History Month
	Dyslexia Week
	International Pronouns Day
	Intersex Awareness Day
<i>November</i>	Diwali
	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
<i>December</i>	Human Rights Independence Day
<i>February</i>	LGBTQ+ History Month
	International Day of Women and Girls in Science
	Purple Friday
	Ramadan & Eid al-Fitr
<i>March</i>	Shrove Tuesday
	Holi
	World Autism Acceptance/Neurodiversity Celebration
	International Transgender Day of Visibility
<i>April</i>	Ramadan & Eid al-Fitr
	Easter
<i>May</i>	International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia
<i>June</i>	Pride Month
	June Refugee Week

Partners

We are committed to working with partners to support our young people; these include our local community partners, LGBT Youth Scotland, TIE, and Education Scotland.

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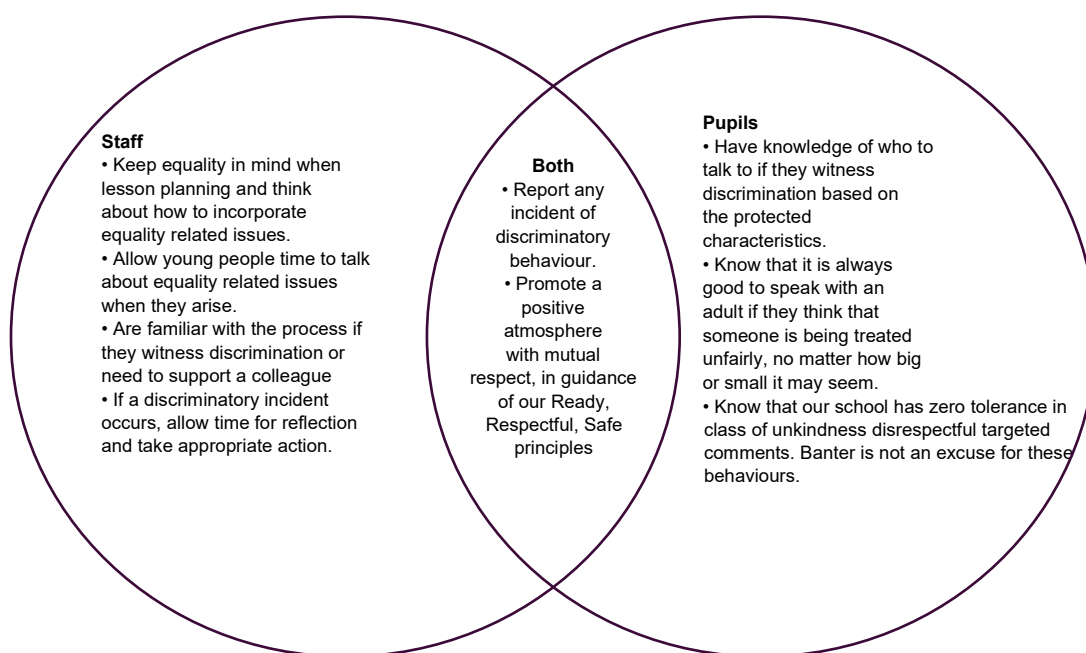
Roles and Responsibilities

Working together

See the diagram below.

Note:

- We have a clear system in place for recording and reporting discriminatory incidents: please see the Scottish Government's [Respect for All](#) Policy.
- Regular CLPL sessions are provided for staff and lessons for pupils.



The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring:

- the policy is readily available, and staff, children, young people and their parents/carers know about it.
- it's procedures are followed.
- regular up-to-date information and data are uploaded to the establishment Education Perspective Report annually.
- all staff know their responsibilities, including the Head Teacher and teacher as leader of learning, and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- The school takes appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination towards learners and staff and follows appropriate procedures.
- The school has appropriate channels and processes in place to encourage all voices to be listened to so that we can support children and young people's confidence in reporting bullying incidents.

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All school staff are responsible for the following:

- promoting equality and a collaborative ethos in the classroom.
- developing school/class rules which challenge discriminatory behaviour.
- modelling good practice and being positive role models.
- proactively supporting learners if they face discrimination or inequalities linked to a protected characteristic.
- reporting discriminatory incidents following recording and reporting procedures.
- recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping.
- promote equality and social justice.
- undertake CLPL opportunities to keep up to date with the law and practice on equality.

Children and young people are responsible for:

- supporting the school's equality ethos.
- treating everyone in the school community with respect.
- supporting students who are being treated unfairly, bullied and disrespected.
- sharing concerns or issues with a member of staff.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- supporting the school's equality ethos.
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff.
- encouraging their children to uphold equality values and principles outside of the school environment.

Partners and visitors are responsible for the following:

- supporting the school's equality ethos.
- sharing concerns or issues with senior staff.

Responsibility for overseeing equality practices in the school lies with the Head Teacher

Responsibilities include:

- co-ordinating and monitoring work on equality issues.
- dealing with and monitoring reports of harassment (including racist and homophobic incidents) through SEEMIS.
- monitoring the progress and attainment of children and young people with protected characteristics.
- monitoring exclusions.

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Monitoring, Reviewing and Assessing Impact

Actions in the School Improvement Plan can support the school's Equality Policy.

Below are some of the activities from this year's or previous plans to illustrate activities and initiatives the school has taken forward

- LGBT+ History Month and Purple Friday.
- Pride Month celebrations and activities; resources for teachers and 'Pride Day.'
- LGBTQ+ Club (Jigsaw).
- Initial stages of decolonising the curriculum.
- Initial Stages of implementing Inclusive Education and Time for Inclusive Education accreditation.
- Stage 1 and 2 TIE training and working towards accreditation.
- The policy will be regularly monitored, reviewed and updated by all stakeholders to ensure that it effectively eliminates discrimination, promotes access and participation, equality and good relations between different groups, and does not disadvantage particular sections of the community.
- Any pattern of inequality found as a result of self-evaluation will be used to inform future planning and decision-making.
- Progress in improving equality in the school will be reported on in the school's Standards and Quality Report.
- This policy links to other policies and in general the principles of equality will apply to all other school policies.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - School Context

This information is compiled and updated to provide a clear picture of the school population's context. This will be used to contextualise our policy and ensure that it reflects the diversity of our school community.

School Context as of 13/03/2026

Staff (teaching)	Number	%
Sex		
Male	22	23%
Female	72	77%
Ethnicity/Race		
White British/Scottish	72	77%
White Other	1	1%
Black and Minority Ethnic	1	1%
Not known/disclosed	20	20%
Disability (disclosed)	2	2%
Children and Young People	Number	%
Sex		
Male	482	51%
Female	457	49%
Ethnicity/Race		
White British/Scottish	737	79%
White other	66	7%
Black and Minority Ethnic	109	12%
Not known/disclosed	27	3%
Additional Support Needs	435	46%
EAL	52	6%
Looked after/Care Experienced	27	3%
Young Carer	31	3%
SIMD 1&2	467	50%

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Appendix 2 - Resources, Organisations and Policies

- <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/technical-guidance-schools-scotland>
- Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights
www.crer.scot
- [Breaking the mould: Principles for an anti-racist curriculum | Resources | Education Scotland](#)
- [Working with boys and young men to prevent sexism and sexual harassment | National Education Union \(neu.org.uk\)](#)
- Stephen Lawrence Foundation website
www.stephenlawrenceday.org
- Anti-bullying service
www.respectme.org.uk
- LGBT inclusive education charity
www.tie.scot
- Supports LGBT young people
www.lgbtyouth.org.uk
- Examples of how to encourage LGBT education through lesson ideas and activities.
[Stonewall](#)
- Regional Observance guideline
[Curriculum for Excellence: religious observance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- Education (Scotland) Act 1980
[Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980 - full text \(education-uk.org\)](#)
- West Lothian's Anti-Racism resources
[Anti-Racism – Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative](#)

We will continue to add to this list over time.