



Sir Robert Vyner Statement

Vyners School was founded in 1959 and we hope to celebrate our 60th anniversary in earnest when it becomes safe to welcome pupils, staff and guests back on site later this year.

The initially proposed name for the school was Ickenham Grammar School; there is no record of why it was instead named after Sir Robert Vyner, a 17th Century Goldsmith, Banker and former Lord Mayor of London.

Vyner had many notable achievements during his lifetime including remaking the crown jewels after the Civil War. Yet it is equally clear Robert Vyner was involved in - and benefitted from - the transatlantic slave trade, as a signatory of the Royal African Charter in 1672.

The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on 25th March, and the Black Lives Matter movement's activism before and after that tragic incident, has led to an increased and much-needed focus on the past, present and future of racial equality. Part of this has been increased scrutiny on historical figures whose achievements include activity incompatible with a contemporary moral perspective. We recognise that Sir Robert Vyner is certainly such a figure.

Vyners School wholeheartedly stands by the Black Lives Matter cause. We have watched with hope as people from a broad range of communities, including our own, have come together in an attempt to right the injustices that BAME communities live with every day.

We acknowledge Sir Robert Vyner's failings without caveat. It is important to clarify that the Vyner family did not found the school, nor has the school ever benefitted, financially or otherwise, from its association with the Vyner name. For a better reflection of our values we present our "Community, Aspiration, Respect and Endeavour (CARE)" pillars, which were established by the school in 2013 and aspire towards diversity and equality in education.

We recognise that we must continue to take time to listen, to educate ourselves, and reflect on the complexities of our history so that we are able to adapt and improve in the future. Some may believe that the school should consult on a potential renaming. While we are not seeking to do this at this time, we are keen to engage with our stakeholders as to how best to strengthen our Equality and Diversity Plans further still.

We don't think this is a conversation which is appropriately conducted on social media, but it *is* a conversation that should be open to all. If you would like to contribute your views please email office@vynersschool.org.uk using a valid name, email address and stating your connection with the school (or if you have none).

Gary Mullings
Headteacher

Mark Hague
Chair of Governors