



# International Women's Day at Highlands School

**Imagine a gender equal world.  
A world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination.  
A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive.  
A world where difference is valued and celebrated.  
Together we can forge women's equality.**

**Collectively we can all #AccelerateAction.**

International Women's Day, 8th March 2025





## What is International Women's Day?

Since 1911, International Women's Day (IWD) has worked towards achieving gender equality by raising awareness of discrimination and celebrating women's achievements. Despite progress, IWD remains crucial in today's society.

According to the World Economic Forum, it will take until 2158, approximately five generations, to reach full gender parity. This highlights the ongoing need for continued action in promoting equality and breaking down barriers for women.

It is celebrated on 8th March every year. This year's IWD campaign theme is ***Accelerate Action***.

### **#AccelerateAction** **Challenging Stereotypes and Limiting Beliefs**

#### **Urgency for change:**

***Accelerate Action*** emphasises the need for swift and decisive steps to close the gender equality gap, urging immediate action rather than waiting for incremental progress.

#### **Addressing systemic barriers:**

The theme calls for tackling the systemic barriers and biases that women face in both personal and professional spaces, ensuring equal opportunities for all.

#### **Momentum for equality:**

It stresses the importance of maintaining momentum in the fight for gender equality, pushing for quicker, more impactful results in the areas of education, healthcare, leadership, and workplace rights.

#### **Global Call to Action**

***Accelerate Action*** serves as a global reminder that change is urgent and everyone has a role to play in creating a more equal world for women.



## Equality vs Equity

What is the difference between equality and equity?



**Equality**

**Treating each person the same and giving everyone equal access to opportunity.**



**Equity**

**Providing proportional resources so that everyone can reach the same goal.**

Equity aims to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups. It is important to recognise that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.





## Who are these women and why are they important?

### Ada Lovelace (1815–1852)

Often considered the world's first computer programmer, Ada Lovelace made groundbreaking contributions to the field of mathematics and computing. Her work on Charles Babbage's Analytical Engine included the first algorithm intended for implementation on a machine. Her visionary ideas laid the foundation for modern computing, far ahead of her time.



### Dame Jane Morris Goodall (born 1934)

Formerly Baroness Jane van Lawick-Goodall, is an English zoologist, primatologist and anthropologist. She is considered the world's foremost expert on chimpanzees, after 60 years studying the social and family interactions of wild chimpanzees.

She is the founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and the Roots & Shoots programme and has worked extensively on conservation and animal welfare issues.



### Dame Kelly Holmes (born 1970)

Dame Kelly Holmes is a retired British middle-distance runner who won two Olympic gold medals in the 800m and 1500m at the 2004 Athens Olympics. Beyond her athletic achievements, she is a passionate advocate for women's rights, mental health awareness, and gender equality in sports. She has worked to break down barriers for women in athletics and inspire others to pursue careers in sports.



Through her Dame Kelly Holmes Trust, she helps young people overcome challenges via sport and mentoring, empowering them to transform their lives. She has also spoken openly about her mental health struggles, helping to reduce stigma and encourage others to seek support.



## Who are these women and why are they important?

### **Sister Nivedita (Margaret Elizabeth Noble)**

Sister Nivedita, an Irish-born British woman, moved to India in the late 19th century and became a close associate of Swami Vivekananda. She devoted her life to social work, education, and the empowerment of women.

Although originally from Britain, she became deeply involved in Indian affairs, advocating for education, social reform, and women's rights.

Nivedita worked tirelessly to promote education for Indian women and supported a progressive vision for India.

She also played a key role in promoting Indian culture, social justice, and spreading the teachings of Swami Vivekananda both in India and the West.

Her activism, while focused in India, had a significant international impact, influencing British views on India's potential for change and progress.



### **Rashida Manjoo (born 1961)**

Rashida Manjoo is a South African-born British academic and human rights activist known for her significant contributions to women's rights.

As the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, she worked tirelessly to address gender-based violence and advocate for women's and girls' rights globally.

Manjoo's efforts to strengthen laws, amplify women's voices, and promote social justice have accelerated action on a global scale. Her leadership and advocacy have inspired countless women to fight for their rights and demand systemic change, exemplifying the drive for gender equality and the elimination of violence against women.





## Celebrating International Women's Day At Highlands School

This week, we celebrated International Women's Day at Highlands School with a variety of events, including a successful bake sale that raised money for *Women's Aid*. *Women's Aid* is the national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. This is incredibly relevant as the UK government has declared violence against women a 'national emergency'. The sale was a fantastic way to support a vital cause while enjoying delicious treats, thank you to everyone who contributed.



Throughout the week, students enjoyed an insightful assembly presented by Yagmur, Flori, Joseph, and Eleanor, who are members of the school's first-ever feminist society, *FemSoc*. During the assembly, they explained the significance of International Women's Day and this year's theme, **Accelerate Action**, which emphasised the urgency of taking decisive steps toward achieving gender equality.

Sign up to  
**FemSoc**  
Highlands' first  
ever feminist  
society.







## Celebrating International Women's Day At Highlands School

The *FemSoc* members attended a seminar by Dr. Sian Oram from King's College London. They took part in this seminar with great enthusiasm and left with valuable insights into the importance of women's mental health. They particularly appreciated Dr. Sian Oram's presentation, which highlighted the unique mental health challenges women face due to biological, psychological, and social factors. They were surprised to learn how women have historically been excluded from research and the ongoing barriers they encounter, including societal expectations and limited access to healthcare. The group found the discussions about gender inequality, domestic violence, and cultural beliefs surrounding menstruation especially eye-opening.

Overall, they gained a deeper understanding of why targeted research and societal change are crucial for improving women's mental health.

*FemSoc* provides a platform for discussions on women's rights and equality, and their efforts are truly making a difference. It was an inspiring week filled with action and awareness!

