



Strategic Equality Plan

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Introduction and Context

The new Equality Act 2010 harmonises and streamlines legislation that has come before it and refers to “Protected Characteristics” as follows:-

- Age (for staff only)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Under the terms of the Equality Act 2010 Schools are required to develop and publish Equality Objectives and a Strategic Equality Plan by April 2012, with the purpose of the objectives and plans being to enable the delivery of measurable equality outcomes which improve the lives of individuals and communities. SEPs must include equality objectives and demonstrate what the school will do to achieve them. They must also demonstrate that the school collects relevant information and evidence on which to base its decisions. The plan is also required to outline processes for monitoring progress and assessing the impact of proposals.

Our plan needs to ensure that it reflects what has been agreed in the Conwy County Borough Council top level Strategic Equality Plan. Information relating to Conwy County Borough Councils Equality Objectives and Action Areas are outlined in Appendix 1. There is a whole objective around Education and the actions have already been identified and agreed with the Education Service (see Appendix 2). These are incorporated into our school plans, to ensure that Conwy achieves its overall objectives, specifically in Education around attainment and bullying. There are also actions in other parts of the Plan which are either directly the responsibility of Education/Schools or linked to joint actions between Education and other bodies, eg, Careers Wales. Our school plan reflects what actions we will take to achieve these overall objectives and actions, as well as identifying anything else we need to address because of what our school data tells us or through consultation with our parents, Governors and pupils (through School Councils, etc).

In developing our SEP, we need to ensure that our plan reflects the principles of relevance and proportionality. In other words, the actions taken by our school should be proportionate to the equality issues within our school and are relevant to our school's plans and policies, both currently and what is anticipated could become relevant at some time in the future. When considering capacity and resources, it makes sense for our school to take direction from authority-wide, regional or national research and engagement exercises as well as work which we can do ourselves. Equality objectives are linked to existing strategies and approaches to inclusion, bullying, behaviour management, improving attainment, pupil voice, wellbeing and pupil support. Ysgol Maes Owen will seek to build on our existing work and to ensure questions of equality and fairness are considered in the mainstream of activities.

In addition to the above, some of the equalities objectives included in our plan will emanate from issues identified as a result of consultation undertaken with pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and members of the wider school community. These combined objectives, together with issues arising from analysis of our school's data will form the basis of the equality objectives within our SEP for the next four years.

- Should a school choose not to publish an equality objective covering each of the protected characteristics, it is required to publish robust and justifiable reasons for this decision.
- Headteachers, or any other staff member given responsibility for the preparation of this work, are encouraged to consider the accompanying guidance. Similarly, schools are advised to work in their clusters or Families of Schools in the preparation of their SEPs, so as to minimise burden.
- Please note that whilst schools' current responsibilities to prepare Disability Equality and Race Equality schemes are revoked, the requirement to prepare Disability Access Plans remains and should be included as an Appendix to your SEP. Similarly, the requirement to record, monitor and report on all racial incidents remains the same.

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Appendices

App. 1	Conwy County Borough Council Equality Objectives and Action Areas
App. 2	Conwy County Borough Council Action Plan incorporating corporate actions for Education / schools
App. 3	Additional School Equality Objectives and Action Plan
App. 4	School Access Plan (use your current plan for 2010-2013)
App.5	Process Chart for the development & review of Equality Policy
App.6	Equality Impact Assessment Guidance
Annex 1 to App. 6	WLGA Publication - Common Equality Risks in Education – Guidance for assessing impact in schools.

1. Our Distinctive Character, priorities and aims

1.1 School values

**‘Aim to learn, learn to succeed’
‘Anelu at ddysgu, dysgu i lwyddo’**

At Ysgol Maes Owen, we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff, parents and carers receiving services from the school, irrespective of disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage and civil partnership. We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and able to participate fully in school life.

The achievement of pupils will be monitored and we will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Ysgol Maes Owen, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

1.2 Characteristics of our school

Ysgol Maes Owen is a Community Junior School catering for children aged 7-11. It is situated in Kinmel Bay, on the outskirts of the seaside town of Rhyl. Our pupils come from the communities of Kinmel Bay and Towyn, with some pupils coming from outlying areas such as Rhyl, Pensarn and Belgrano. Our school is in a Communities First area. Around a third of our pupils come from Communities First homes.

Key Features of Our School

- There are nine classes,
- Pupil are taught in mixed age classes:
 - Four year 3 and 4 classes
 - Four year 5 and 6 classes
 - Learnin Resource Base
- 95% of our pupils are white British, the same as the LA
- 48% of our pupils are girls, 52% are boys
- 47% of pupils are on the SEN register. 27% are at School Action, 14% are at School Action Plus, 6% are School Action + with contract and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. 13% of the pupils have been identified as More Able and Talented for literacy and numeracy
- There is one Looked After Child in school
- The percentage of pupils entitled to Free School Meals has risen to 34%,
- Attendance is 93%, a percentage point lower than the LA and Wales average
- The school has a very transient population with 24 joining and 10 leaving during the 2018/19 academic year and 16 joining and 8 leaving during the 2019-20 academic year.. However, intuitive teaching and nurture strategies assist with any challenges posed and provide quality experiences for pupils involved
- The Senior Leadership Team is made up of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, ALNCo and Head of Upper School and Head of Lower School
- Staff number currently:
 - 13 teachers, including the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher
 - 3 ALN Teaching Assistants
 - 1 Inclusion Teaching Assistants
 - 5 Teaching Assistants
 - 1 Office Manager
 - 1 Caretaker
 - 1 Cleaner
 - 4 kitchen staff
 - Most of our TAs assist with Lunch Time supervision, in addition we have one other mid-day supervisor.

At Ysgol Maes Owen we work together to provide the children in our care with an excellent education, whilst nurturing and caring for their needs as they develop and grow.

We do this by planning and providing for each child as an individual; ensuring support and challenge in all areas. We believe that this is only possible through working together and creating clear routes of communication. Confidence in a school comes from knowing and understanding what is happening within it. We aim to involve all parents, families, guardians and members of our local community. We sincerely believe that all adults involved in a child's life have a direct impact and by working together we can ensure success.

We currently have 224 pupils in school, 36% are on the Additional Learning Needs register and receive an intervention provision of some description. We currently have 10 different intervention groups in place in school and carefully planned learning experiences for differing needs

- Literacy Support
- Catch Up Numeracy
- Catch Up Literacy
- Narrative/Speech & Language Support
- Nurture Support
- Pyramid Club developing well being and self esteem
- Anger Management/Counselling (One run by our own TA, another group run by a Teacher from Gyffin PRU)
- More Able and Talented provision in Numeracy, Literacy, Science, Music, PE, Art
- Group Education Plans, Individual Education Plans, Individual Behaviour Plans, Individual Communication Plans and Individual Reactive Strategies (for pupils who can be physically challenging)

1.3 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As outlined in our Equality Policy, we aim to;

- Offer equal opportunities regardless of race, culture, gender, academic ability, physical ability or class.
- Provide an environment free from social, sexual or cultural prejudice for all members of our school community.
- Achieve an environment in which members of the school community can be respected as individuals and in which the varied experiences of the community can enrich the life of the school.

As well as the specific actions set out beneath this plan, the school operates equality of opportunity in its day to day practice in the following ways.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, we will:

- use contextual data to improve the ways in which we provide support to individuals and groups of pupils;
- monitor achievement data according to the various protected characteristics and action any gaps;
- take account of the achievement of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets;
- ensure equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society;
- use materials that reflect the diversity of the school, population and local community in terms of the various protected characteristics, without stereotyping;
- promote attitudes and values that will challenge racist and other discriminatory behaviour or prejudice;
- provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and celebrate the diversity of other cultures;
- seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education;
- encouraging classroom and staffroom discussion of equality issues which reflect on social stereotypes, expectations and the impact on learning;
- include teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils

1.4 Setting our equality objectives

We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish equality for all learners, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of our **Strategic Equality Plan (SEP)** is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with 'protected characteristics', and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our school plans and policies.

In setting the equality objectives for this school, we will take due regard to the Equality Act general duty:

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this means
 - a. removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
 - b. taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
 - c. encouraging persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Our SEP and Equality Objectives are set in the light of:

- Conwy County Borough Council's SEP and equality objectives identified in **Appendix 1**;
- views expressed by stakeholders that have been involved in the development of the scheme;
- issues arising as a result of our analysis of our pupil data, e.g. attainment data of boys v. girls and other groups;

The delivery of our SEP will contribute to all of our actions and commitments to:

- raise standards;
- narrow the attainment gap in outcomes for children and young people;
- improve outcomes as described within the Children and Young People Plan (CYPP);
- promote community cohesion

Our School Equality Objectives are set out in **Section 5 (p.13)**. See also **Appendix 2 and Appendix 3**.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body has set out its commitment to equality and diversity in this plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive to pupils, and responsive to their needs based on the various protected characteristics. The governing body:

- seeks to ensure that people are not discriminated against when applying for jobs at our school;
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the school environment gives access to people with disabilities, and also strive to make communications as inclusive as possible for parents, carers and pupils;
- ensures that no child is discriminated against whilst in our school

In order to meet its reporting responsibility, the governing body will report on the progress of the SEP annually, as part of its Annual Report to parents.

2.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The SLT promotes equality and eliminates discrimination by:

- implementing the school's SEP, supported by the governing body in doing so;
- ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Act and are fully informed of our school's SEP and equality objectives,
- ensuring that all appointments' panels give due regard to this plan, so that no one is discriminated against when it comes to employment or training opportunities;
- promoting the principle of equal opportunity when developing the curriculum, and promoting respect for other people and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life;
- treating all incidents of unfair treatment and any incidents of bullying or discrimination, including racist incidents, according to the Authority's and school's policies
- ensuring that all staff are aware of the SEP and are accountable to ensuring it's principles are adhered to

2.3 Staff – teaching and non-teaching

The school regards equality for all as a responsibility for all. All members of staff contribute to ensuring that our school is a fair, just and cohesive community by:

- ensuring that all pupils are treated fairly, equally and with respect, and will maintain awareness of the school's SEP;
- striving to provide material that gives positive images based on the protected characteristics and challenges stereotypical images;
- challenging any incidents of prejudice against different protected groups, including racism, homophobia or prejudice targeted at disabled pupils, and record any serious incidents as prescribed in the LA and school's policies, e.g. reporting of racial incidents;
- supporting the work of ancillary or support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents

3. Information gathering and Engagement

3.1 Purpose and process

The collection of information is crucial to supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate discrimination within the school community. The information also subsequently helps us to review our performance, so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessment and identify which of the school's aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

Engagement is based on the information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible while recognising issues of sensitivity in relation to the different protected characteristics. We take particular steps to ensure disabled children and young people, parents and carers are involved as is their entitlement. The reason that this progress is important is to understand the full range of needs of the school community.

3.2 Types of information gathered

The wide range of information gathered to support our planning and action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination includes the following:

- an analysis of the responses received from pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors and community groups following the distribution of a questionnaire to determine equality issues. The questions included in the questionnaire do not highlight specific protected characteristics, but seek to obtain stakeholders' views across the board (respondents will be asked to complete an equality monitoring questionnaire so that we can analyse feedback appropriate to different protected groups);
- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics, if possible and appropriate. This helps us develop and monitor the scheme. Comprehensive and sensitive efforts are made to collect accurate information and meet data protection requirements, in addition to our duty to secure accurate information relating to ethnicity and first language;
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;

- children and young people's views actively sought and incorporated in a way that values their contribution;
- information about how different groups access the whole curriculum and how they make choices between subject options;
- sports and activities choices of all groups;
- uptake of enrichment activities by group;
- exclusions data analysed by group;
- records of bullying and harassment on the grounds of any equality issue;
- data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees;
- outcomes of activities promoting community engagement and community cohesion;
- outcomes of actions taken to secure the involvement of parents and others who have been identified as difficult to engage;

3.3 Engagement

The school involves **stakeholders** including children and young people, staff, parents/carers, governors and other users of the school in relation to all equalities duties. We take into account the preferred means of communication for those with whom we are consulting e.g. translated materials or interpretation facilities for disabled people or those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country.

The views of stakeholders and other equalities related groups are genuinely taken into account when we set priorities.

- **How we developed our Policy - Participation and Involvement**

The development of this policy has involved the whole of our school community. At a full Governor's meeting and at a staff meeting in Summer term 2016, we looked at the contents of the draft policy and considered objectives to develop our equality provision. We then repeated this process with our Parent's Council which also met in Summer term 2016. The School Council has been consulted and they have provided a further insight with their views on equality and the importance of cohesion in our school community.

We've involved and listened to what they have to say, including people from broad and diverse backgrounds and of different abilities, taking account of all the protected characteristics listed under the Equality Act 2010

- **Our pupils/students**

All pupil's views were initially received through a School Council meeting and then through discussions.

- **Our staff**

All staff views were sought during a staff meeting which involved teachers, teaching assistants and Senior Leaders.

- **Our school governors**

Governors openly discussed the subject of equality during a Full Governing Body meeting. Governors suggested a lack of opportunity for our pupils to work alongside older people (retired age group) as many of our pupils do not have their grandparents living nearby. It was noted that our pupils and older pupils benefit greatly from the visits carried out around Christmas time and when taking part in the Intergenerational projects – IT Mentoring and Knitterbugs. It was said that it encouraged respect in our pupils for older generations. It was suggested that a year round project be considered to link older residents of the community with the school to "adopt" a class, (hearing readers, coming on trips etc)

- **Parents/carers**

The Parent's Council meetings were advertised on the school website, newsletter and Twitter page. For those less likely to engage, a paper questionnaire was issued.

- **Minority, marginalised and potentially vulnerable groups**

Our cohort of parents and Governors were invited openly to attend the relevant meetings to share information. Our school building caters for vulnerable groups to meet there in various ways. The DDA friendly, physical arrangement of our school, (including ramps) enables involvement. Involvement in school Parent Forum does not incur a cost to parents. Many events at school provide free child care to enable parents to participate, eg; PTA meetings and parent's evenings).

- **Our partners in the community**

Through our Governing Body, links are currently being made to invite retired members of their community to join in with school activities. Other links have been made with the committee of Y Morfa leisure centre and Kinmel Bay Community Library, to ensure there are activities for our pupils. We have strong links to the Community House on Chester Avenue and to the various community groups that meet there, eg; Credit Union. We have Governors who serve on the town council who have linked the school with the local library and community centre.

- **Ongoing:**

Dialogue will be kept open through Governor's meetings involving key Governors who are actively developing links for our children with older people.

4. Equality Impact Assessment

Impact assessment refers to the review of all current and proposed plans and policies in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure no person is disadvantaged by school activities through discrimination. Impact assessments are an on-going process to ensure that the school's plans and policies are developed in an increasingly inclusive and equitable way.

As part of this school's compliance of the specific duties of the Act, we will continue to undertake impact assessment of all new policies and plans (including budgetary decisions) prior to them being implemented. Similarly, we will impact assess our existing policies and plans whenever they are reviewed. As such, impact assessments are incorporated into the school's planned review and revision of every policy.

Where impact assessments have been done, they will influence changes to policy and the review of the SEP itself.

N.B Please refer to Appendix 6 for Guidance on assessing impact in schools.

5. Objectives and Action Plans

In addition to Conwy County Borough Council's agreed Equality Objectives and actions already agreed corporately (see Appendix 1 and 2), our chosen Equality Objectives are:

1. *The care and attitude towards older people are improved to ensure that they are treated with dignity and respect*
2. *The educational achievement gap between different groups reduces (FSM and non-FSM)*

We have action plans covering all relevant protected characteristics (see Appendix 2 and 3). These describe how we are taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

Our action plans are cross referenced with the School Improvement Plan, which ensures that they are checked, monitored and evaluated systematically.

The action plans show:

- objectives and specific actions;
- expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria);
- clear timescales;
- who has lead responsibility;
- resource implications;
- specified dates for impact assessment and review.

The school evaluates the effectiveness of the SEP on a regular basis, through the Governing Body and with Estyn when the school is inspected.

6. Publication and reporting

The school provides a copy of its SEP and its Action Plan to meet its equality objectives in a range of formats and actively makes it available to parents/carers and others, including those identified as difficult to engage. The school prospectus includes a reference to the SEP and the values underpinning it.

The school reports annually on the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the SEP itself on school ethos and practice within the school. This is undertaken as part of the Governors' Annual Report.

All data collected will be used solely for the purpose of analysing trends by protected characteristic in performance, take-up and satisfaction with services offered by the school or local authority. Such information will be stored separately from personal information which identifies the individual. In order to protect the identities of individuals when trend information is published no counts containing less than 5 individuals will be published.

7. Monitor and Review

As part of our responsibility to monitor the SEP, we commit to:

- revisiting and analysing the information and data used to identify priorities for the SEP and action plans. This incorporates use of the overview of outcomes;
- using the impact assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

The review of the SEP informs its revision, the setting of new priorities and action plans. This process continues to:

- involve the participation of a full range of stakeholders;
- be evidenced based - using information and data that the school has gathered and analysed;
- use the evidence to do accurate impact assessments which inform priorities.

We will undertake a full review of our SEP in Autumn 2020 (*Conwy County Borough Council's SEP is to be reviewed in 2015 in line with the next review of the Corporate Plan and One Conwy and the National Plans to amalgamate key strategic documents – however, all SEPs must be reviewed and republished at least every 4 years*).