



Ysgol Bryn Castell (YBC)

Equality and Diversity Policy

Date: March 2024

Review Date: March 2027

Introduction

This policy is informed by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which combines and builds upon the existing legislation covering discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity. The 2010 act brings together into one act those areas known as 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection from discrimination such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Ysgol Bryn Castell is an inclusive school where we focus on the progress and wellbeing of every child and where all members of our community are of equal worth. We are committed to working for equality for all our staff, parents/carers and children to meet our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The act provides a framework to support this commitment to valuing diversity, tackling discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relationships between people. It also ensures that we continue to tackle issues of disadvantage and underachievement of different groups.

This policy links specifically to a wide range of other school policies, such as anti-bullying, behaviour and discipline and recruitment. However, the implications of this policy apply across all other policies and all aspects of school life in the application of fair and equal treatment and opportunities for people of all protected characteristics. At Ysgol Bryn Castell, we believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and oppose any direct or indirect discrimination against individuals or groups on the basis of any nine protected characteristics.

In law, these characteristics are defined as:

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation

Aims

- To uphold the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- To treat everyone equally irrespective of any protected characteristic.
- To maintain an ethos throughout the school in which pupils, staff, parents and visitors feel valued and secure.
- To build self-esteem and confidence in our pupils, removing or minimising barriers to learning, so that all pupils can achieve the very best that they capable of.

- To actively tackle discrimination and promote equality through school documentation, programmes of work, displays and communication channels.
- To identify clear procedures for dealing quickly and fairly with any negative incidents.
- To ensure that all staff and pupils are confident to challenge any incidents of discrimination.
- To work with other schools to share good practice and learn from each other.

United National Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

We have high expectations of all pupils and we aim to provide them with every opportunity to succeed by providing the highest standards of teaching and learning. Pupil committees, including the school Parliament are encouraged to express their views and opinions about matters that affect them in accordance with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This policy also supports the following articles (child speak titles):

- Article 2 – No discrimination
- Article 14 – Freedom of thought and religion
- Article 22 – Refugee children
- Article 23 – Children with disabilities
- Article 29 – Aims of education
- Article 30 – Minority culture, language and religion.

Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal responsibilities including those arising from relevant legislation. With assistance from the Headteacher, the Governing Body will ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies, are implemented.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible, with the Governing Body, for ensuring that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The Headteacher ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under the policy and that they are given appropriate training and support to enable them to fulfil these responsibilities. The Headteacher will take disciplinary action against staff or pupils who are found to have discriminated on homophobic, disability, gender, religious or racial grounds. Any such incidents are recorded and reported to the local authority.

All staff

All school staff have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to keep themselves up to date with relevant legislation, including attending appropriate training and information events. The school aims to give staff regular training to deal with equalities and to promote familiarity with the Equality and Diversity Policy in order to identify and challenge racial and other forms of bias and stereotyping. All staff have a role to play in the equality's self-evaluation process.

Teaching staff and other classroom-based staff

Teachers and other classroom-based staff should ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to have full access to the curriculum and are included in all activities. Through their teaching and relations with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the wider community, staff promote equality of opportunity and understanding of diversity.

Recruitment and training

The Governing Body adheres fully to the BCBC fair recruitment procedures and ensures that the principles of equal opportunity are adhered to in all aspects of the recruitment process. The Governing Body welcomes applications for vacant posts from appropriately qualified persons regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

To facilitate implementation of this Equality & Diversity Policy, it is an aim that all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and as many governors as possible receive training on the implications of the relevant legislation for their roles in school. Ongoing training is provided for staff through the BCBC online training modules.

Admissions

Pupils' gender and information about all pupils' ethnicity, home language, religion and dietary requirements is collected through admission forms and entered on the school secure database (Capita SIMS).

Attendance

We encourage good attendance of all pupils and work together with staff, pupils, parents/carers and the Education Welfare Service to ensure that high levels of attendance are achieved for each individual pupil. The school has a well-established procedure for dealing with absences. Unexplained absences are followed up with direct messaging and involvement of the Education Welfare Service where required. The taking of extended leave, e.g. holidays during term time is discouraged. However, if pupils have an extended absence for unavoidable medical reasons, the school will work with parents to provide alternative provision so far as is reasonably practicable.

We recognise pupils' rights to take time off for religious observance and staff who follow up absences are aware of and sensitive to relevant cultural and religious issues.

Attainment, progress and assessment

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils achieve to the highest standards. We value many forms of personal and academic achievement. We monitor individual pupils' attainment and progress and carefully scrutinise the performance of pupils with a range of vulnerabilities, e.g. looked after, English as an additional language, to identify any differences between the performances of such groups. We aim to address disparities through planned and targeted support.

The school is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the curriculum and extracurricular activities are available to all. In particular, the school aims to ensure that disabled pupils and visitors have full access to all appropriate areas of the school and school activities.

Celebrating and catering for diversity

We encourage all pupils to understand, respect and value peoples, cultures and faiths with which they are unfamiliar and foster a positive atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. We actively promote good personal relations to prepare all pupils for life in a diverse and multi-ethnic society.

We take every care to ensure that any specific cultural or religious needs of pupils are addressed in school. Advice is sought on catering for the dietary and dress requirements of different ethnic and religious groups. The school enables pupils to observe festivals and other events relevant to their particular faith and actively encourages all pupils to understand and respect such festivals and events.

Teaching and learning

We take positive steps to ensure that all pupils can participate and feel that their contributions are valued. All teachers are aware of their pupils' cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs and teach about different cultural traditions with sensitivity. We encourage pupils of all backgrounds to work together with cooperation and understanding, learning from each other's varied experiences. Our teaching seeks to challenge prejudice and stereotypes, and we try to foster pupils' critical awareness of bias, inequality and injustice to help them identify and challenge discrimination.

Promoting cultural diversity through the curriculum

We have as an aim the recognition and understanding of cultural diversity in all curriculum areas; through teaching a balance of positive, culturally diverse content. Principles of equality and respect for people of different sexual orientation, gender, physical and intellectual ability and of different racial and ethnic groups are present throughout the curriculum and pupils are given opportunities to explore issues of identity and equality in the appropriate curriculum areas. We evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum for pupils of all groups and, have as an aim, where appropriate, to monitor its effectiveness in promoting understanding of diversity.

Curriculum access

We make every effort to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum by taking account of their individual cultural backgrounds and linguistic needs, physical and intellectual abilities and by differentiating work appropriately.

Resources

Our resources and displays portray positive images of a range of people and cultures. We use a variety of resources to challenge stereotypes and all forms of discrimination and prejudice across the curriculum.

Contractors and service providers

We expect all contractors and visitors to the school to be treated and to behave in a manner that is consistent with this policy. Equal opportunity standards are incorporated into all contracts with service providers such as catering, cleaning and building maintenance.

Breaches of policy

Complaints about the non-compliance with this policy are dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints procedure. Specific incidents of racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation involving members of staff are dealt with in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing, Resolution and Disciplinary Procedures.