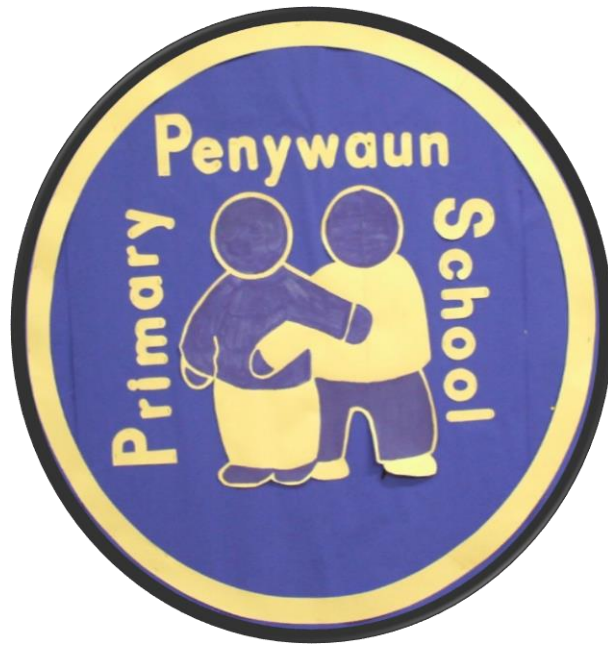


Penywaun Primary School



# Equality Policy

## **Introduction**

Penywaun Primary School, is a school for pupils aged 3-11. It is a medium sized primary school with 190 pupils, including pupils in our Nursery class. The school hosts an LA Learning Resource Base in KS2.

The school serves a significantly socio-economically deprived area at the top of the Cynon Valley. The catchment area is the village of Penywaun, which is nearly all council housing. Almost all pupils live in Penywaun apart from some pupils attending our Learning Resource Base who are brought to school by taxi. Penywaun is an area of high unemployment and 67% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above local and national averages.

The number of pupils currently on roll is 190 pupils. 9 of these pupils are taught in our Learning Resource Base.

We have a full-time Nursery and seven mainstream classes. We have a Communication Disorder Unit in Key Stage 2 and some of the 9 pupils in there are integrated for certain parts of the day if appropriate to their needs.

At Penywaun Primary School we strive to promote an inclusive school with a common vision for all our pupils. Our vision at Penywaun Primary School is to be a successful, child-centred school at the heart of our community. We aim to be a school where staff, governors and parents work actively together with our pupils, to ensure children receive a rich, inspiring and engaging education; enabling every child to become a lifelong learner, aspiring to high standards of achievement in all aspects of their life.

## **Context**

The Equality Act 2010 gives us the framework for this plan. The Human Rights Act 1998, the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 are also relevant to this policy. This Plan was reported in the Head teachers report to Governors April 2012 and approved by the Governing Body in June 2012

### **Equality vision and equality objectives**

The Equality Act 2010 requires all schools to have equality objectives in place. These objectives cover all following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and include the Welsh language in Wales. Actions to achieve these objectives are in the action plan at the end of this document.

To choose objectives for Penywaun Primary School we:

- ✓ Discussed at staff meetings and schools' council
- ✓ Drew up a long list with associated actions and chose the most important to us as a school
- ✓ Asked parents views
- ✓ Children views
- ✓ Approved at Governors

These are the equality objectives we chose.

- ✓ To ensure all young people, staff and other adults respect each other and that harassment is consistently and robustly responded to, both with regard to victim and perpetrator so that school is a safe and happy place to learn.
- ✓ To develop a greater pupil voice on aspects of school life and to ensure young people are listened to and influence decision making. .
- ✓ To foster and promote good relations and active participation with all stakeholders encouraging an open door environment.

The following plan sets out our equality commitments. Actions are included in the Action Plan and the Strategic Equality Plan will be evaluated through the school Equality Self Evaluation Tool.

### **School strategies and equalities**

Implementing the Strategic Equality Plan is a key part of the School Improvement. Progress on this plan is reported to the Governors annually and included in the School's Self Evaluation. The Plan will be reviewed within 4 years of setting the equality objectives.

### **The national equality agenda**

The following pieces of legislation are at the heart of the equality agenda.

#### **The Equality Act 2010**

The 9 protected characteristics of the 2010 Equality Act include everybody: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act sets down Public Sector Duties that apply to all the school's functions:-

- ✓ Promoting equality of opportunity
- ✓ Promoting good community relations
- ✓ Eliminating discrimination

Specific public sector duties for Wales are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, as issued by the Welsh Assembly Government.

#### **The Human Rights Act 1998**

Human Rights and equality are inextricably linked. Equality is treated as a fundamental human right, from the principle of equal respect for the inherent dignity of all people.

Article 14 of the Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination 'on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status'.

The words 'other status' have been held to cover, amongst other things, sexual orientation, illegitimacy, marital status, trade union membership, transsexualism, disability, carers and imprisonment.

Article 14 can only be used when attached to a complaint relating to another article of the Convention such as Article 3: right to life, liberty and security of person or Article 8: right to a private and family life, home and correspondence.

In some instances, the Human Rights Act 1998 gives greater rights to people than other equalities legislation because it judges treatment against a fixed standard and does not rely on comparison between treatment of one group of people and another.

### **The Welsh Language Act 1993 & the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011**

The Welsh language has official status and belongs to all the people of Wales. The Welsh Language Measure puts the Welsh and English language on a basis of equality. The Welsh Language Education Scheme was approved by CSCJES and applies to all schools. The principles of the Scheme and this Plan are similar- in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations we will take the Welsh language into account alongside all the protected characteristics.

#### **Pupils**

Our school is open to everyone. We will not discriminate in our admissions criteria, in providing education and access to any benefit, service or facility either directly or indirectly, against anyone with a protected characteristic.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of:

- ✓ disability
- ✓ gender reassignment
- ✓ marriage and civil partnership
- ✓ pregnancy and maternity
- ✓ race
- ✓ religion or belief
- ✓ sex
- ✓ sexual orientation
- ✓ and the Welsh language in Wales.

Age is the 9<sup>th</sup> protected characteristic. In a school context it applies to everybody except pupils.

Opportunities in our school will be of equally high standard for everyone.

The school's duty to our pupils goes beyond just the formal education. It covers all school activities such as extra-curricular and leisure activities, after-school clubs, sports activities and school trips, as well as school facilities such as libraries and IT facilities etc.

The school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. The duty is anticipatory. The school will ask disabled pupils whether they need any support or adjustments so that we are ready for them e.g. produce the lesson notes in large print or in an electronic format before the lesson. In some cases a disabled pupil may receive support under the special educational needs (SEN) framework under Part 4 of the Education Act 1993.

### **How we deliver equality**

We will mainstream equality in providing education, access to benefits, service or facilities by making sure that people:

- ✓ Know the equality duties and the school's equality commitments
- ✓ Can access all the benefits of being at the school
- ✓ Know how to ask for help
- ✓ Are offered suitable support e.g. translation and interpretation, transport, technology, adaptations etc. where the lack of these services would place a person at a disadvantage on the grounds of a protected characteristic – to meet a need, not only a preference
- ✓ The impact upon the person involved is of great importance in determining what is reasonable

### **What support can you expect?**

The school can refuse to deliver support or adaptation if the school can prove that service is 'unreasonable' or 'impractical'. However this can only apply to particular and unforeseen circumstances.

### **Positive Action**

The school can take proportionate positive action to address disadvantages faced by pupils of a protected characteristic, or where it would enable or encourage participation by an under represented group. An example of this is engaging male role models to work with all children (as well as small groups of boys) in order to engage boys in developing better reading and writing skills. We will gather evidence before taking positive action.

### **Communication**

The school will communicate with people in a way that is suitable for them. We will:

- ✓ Design materials that are easy to read- clear language and clear layout
- ✓ Use images that reflect the school and our local community
- ✓ Provide information in a variety of formats including large print, local languages etc. where needed
- ✓ Attach full contact details to make it easy for people to contact us

### **Curriculum, resources and involvement**

We will mainstream equality through the curriculum in our choice of diverse and challenging materials and activities. We will support children and young people examine their lives and personal identity in the light of people's experiences which are both similar and different to them.

The images we use will reflect the diversity of society in a positive way so to meet the third duty of the Equality Act - to promote good relations between people. We will not omit or avoid certain equality issues because to do so would be to promote a false picture of the people of Wales.

We will welcome people across the protected characteristics to our school to share their skills and experience. We will make sure that we make all people feel welcome.

### **Buying goods and services and working in partnership**

The school will pass on its equalities duties to any person or body who:

- ✓ works for us or with us,
- ✓ delivers goods for us,
- ✓ whether they are paid, voluntary or partners.

All school contracts will state that they have to meet the equalities standards as set out in this Plan. The impact of this is that school related activities will be fair and equal for all employees, pupils and parents.

### **Engagement**

The school consults and involves all the school's stakeholders on matters that concern them. Engaging people will give us evidence to work out how well we are doing in delivering equality.

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school. This is done through the school Council, Eco Committee and listening to learners' activities.

### **Training**

We'll make sure that all people involved with the school know our equality commitments and their personal duty under it. We'll provide suitable training for all staff and pupils. Where there are issues or potential issues e.g. social tensions, we'll continue to address matters through the curriculum and where it's needed use targeted external interventions, for example Show Racism the Red Card etc.

We will encourage employees and governors to continually develop their learning and experience of equality matters through a range of methods including study, shadowing, partnerships etc.

### **Complaints and comments**

We like getting feedback about the school. We need people to tell us how we are doing. If you have a concern or complaint, please let us know. You can tell a teacher or school employee, telephone, write

or email us. If you'd like to make an appointment with a relevant person, we'll arrange it and feel free to bring along a friend or colleague for support.

When we deal with a concern or complaint we will do our best to keep people involved informed of what is happening and check that everyone is happy with the process. Advocacy and personal support is available for children and young people who need it.

### **Discrimination, victimisation and harassment**

#### **Discrimination**

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination. The school will make sure that nothing we do discriminates against any person or people on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Human Rights are applicable to all people in relation to the school.

There are four kind of illegal discrimination defined in the Equality Act 2010, they apply to service delivery and employment across the protected characteristics:

1. **Direct discrimination**– where a person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. refused to admit a child because they are Roma.
2. **Combined direct (dual) discrimination** - where a person is treated less favourably because of a combination of protected characteristics e.g. a school excludes a pupil because they are black and male.

**Discrimination based on association** is now illegal. Direct discrimination occurs when you treat a pupil less favourably because of their association with another person who has a protected characteristic e.g. their brother is a disabled person.

**Discrimination based on perception** is now illegal. Direct discrimination also occurs when you treat a pupil less favourably because you mistakenly think that they have a protected characteristic e.g. discrimination against a young person who is believed to be gay, even if they're not.

3. **Indirect discrimination** – when a policy or practice is apparently neutral but the effect places a group of people at a significant disadvantage e.g. a rigid school dress code which does not account for items of clothing linked to religion.
4. **Discrimination arising from disability** – where a person is treated less favourably because of something related to their impairment e.g. a pupil with a learning disability disciplined for not obeying a rule that they hadn't understood because they didn't understand the sign.

## **Harassment including bullying**

The school's work around personal and social education will help build a school community that understands and enjoys equality and diversity.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from harassment. Harassment is unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

The school has responsibility to protect pupils, prospective pupils, former pupils, employees etc. from harassment. The school will be pro-active on protecting people by raising awareness, training teachers and pupils, encouraging people to report harassment and will deal with problems as they arise.

Harassment now includes **harassment based on association** i.e. a friend of a disabled person, **or perception** i.e. mistakenly believed to be Muslim etc.

Where there are instances of bullying in and associated with the school we will deal with instances promptly and sensitively. We recognise that instances that are motivated by prejudice against people of a particular characteristic, or bullying that affects one group of people in particular, has a greater negative effect, both for the people involved and for the school community.

## **Victimisation**

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from victimisation on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics. Victimisation is when a person subjects another person to detriment because they have done, or believed that they will do, a 'protected act.'

A 'protected act' are acts that include giving information or evidence under the Equality Act 2010, bringing proceedings, or making an allegation in relation to the Act, as long as they have done so in good faith- that is they thought they were being honest.

## **Discrimination**

Name calling, physical attacks, threats, the spreading of false rumours in person and on-line are all made more serious where a person is victimised for who they are. We know that discrimination and prejudice are particularly damaging to the individual and to family, friends and the school community. The school will take incidents of discrimination seriously and sensitively. False allegations are also taken seriously.

We will take an active role where discrimination is identified and it involves our employees, pupils or premises. Incidents 'on the bus' or 'outside school' negatively affect our pupils as much as incidents in school and we will tackle it where it is known.

Discrimination involving adults are treated differently to those involving children and young people. All adults are fully responsible for their actions. Children and young people may need support and education in matters to do with prejudice and discrimination and as such we will try to find solutions that involve the whole group and avoid criminalising individuals' because of their actions. We will work with partners to find solutions, in particular where incidents are complicated or involve a wide group of people.

## **Performance/ standards - how we deliver the policy**

### **6.1 Leadership and Management**

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its legal equalities responsibilities. A member of the Governing Body has a watching brief for equalities matters. With assistance from the Headteacher, the Governing Body will ensure that this Plan is implemented.

The Governing Body has equalities issues as regular items on the agenda of Governing Body meetings and there is a governor with responsibility for equalities.

The school will ensure that all incidents of discrimination relating to the school, its pupils and staff are reported and recorded in a register. The register will be shared with the local authority to help it plan anti-discrimination work. Neither the school nor the local authority will ever publicly identify individuals involved in incidents.

### **Performance**

The school will identify, publish and use equalities information each year to show how we are delivering the equality duty. The information we publish will be easy to find and easy to understand.

For pupils and school performance we will be publishing information on:

- ✓ Composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender and by proficiency in English / Welsh
- ✓ Composition broken down by types of disability and special educational needs
- ✓ Inequality of outcome and participation connected with ethnicity, gender and disability, and with proficiency in English / Welsh
- ✓ Instances of discrimination

✓ Complaints.

We will be sensible in producing information. We realise that if the data group is very small then a breakdown of that data will not give us and useful information e.g. looking at the academic achievement of two individuals in a year group cannot tell us about the performance of Chinese pupils in general. No data published that will identify any individual.

Other matters including language needs, behavioural needs, poverty, schooling history etc. will be taken into account in analysing data and developing strategies to address equality differences

### **Employment**

The school aims to be a fair employer and promote a friendly working culture. Without committed enthusiastic, skilled and empowered people the school cannot succeed. We'll create a healthy, safe and supportive work environment where people are respected for who they are and employees can perform at their best.

We want our workforce to reflect society. It is illegal to discriminate either directly or indirectly against people in selecting and employing people, in the terms of employment, access to training, promotion, transfers, retirement, dismissal, and other benefits on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics.

School employees are covered by the school's Pay Policy which ensures that we have robust pay scales, performance management and commitment to continual professional development for employees through all employment levels.

### **Equality Objectives and Action Plan**

Equality and diversity is a normal part of the school's everyday business. This action plan and equality objectives sets out the school's main equality projects.. There may be more or different work needed as opportunities arise.