



POLICY DOCUMENT
for
Equal Opportunities

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Ethos and Values of the School

Vision

To be recognised as outstanding in all that we do.

Mission

To empower and support individuals to be resilient and independent and to develop skills to reach their potential.

Core Values

We are a school defined by a commitment and ambition to be recognised and outstanding in all that we do. Our values are fundamental in ensuring that we achieve our vision and mission.

Rationale

At Pen-y-Cwm School we intend to create an equal opportunities environment in which everyone is enabled to fulfil their potential and to feel pride in their personal identity. We are committed to supporting the achievement of each and every person in this school and to develop our learners as learners, with dignity and self-respect. We are therefore committed to challenging ageism, racism, classism, sexism and discrimination based upon sexuality, special educational needs or perceived notions of ability or disability.

Aims

- We aim to develop a community where diversity is truly accepted and valued and to prepare our learners to be tolerant, humane and just members of a complex and diverse society.
- To create an ethos of shared values which support the principle of achievement for all.
- To help all members of the school community to be able to identify and challenge discrimination.
- To enhance learners' self-esteem.
- To challenge the view of what traditionally has been seen as suitable for girls and boys to learn by paying close attention to several important factors.
- To develop excellent relationships between learners and staff.

Principles

Providing equal opportunities for all learners and staff means:

- Treating learners and staff as individuals with their own abilities, difficulties, attitudes, backgrounds and experiences.
- Challenging myths, stereotypes and misconceptions
- Ensuring that equal access to the curriculum means real opportunity to benefit;
- extending learners' awareness, knowledge and understanding of different cultures, languages and faith
- Valuing cultural diversity by drawing on learners and staff backgrounds and experiences
- Offering positive images and role models from all cultures

Guidelines

1. **The Curriculum:** The statutory framework of the National Curriculum requires all schools and staff to tackle issues of equal opportunities under cross-curricular dimensions. The curriculum, in its totality, carries the values of the school and it is, therefore, important to openly examine the values which are portrayed.
2. **Social Processes:** How are learners seated in the classroom; what quality of interactions occur between learners; what are our access arrangements for wheelchair users; how is the curriculum differentiated etc?
3. **Specific Procedures:** As a school we need to be clear on how we respond to a demonstration of discriminatory values and behaviours and develop specific procedures on:
 - Responding to incident of sexual harassment or abuse
 - Responding to incident of racial harassment or abuse
4. **Staff development:** Making this policy work depends upon the abilities and skills of all staff and the need to liaise and draw upon existing skills and local expertise.

Implications

- It is important that everyone at Pen-y-Cwm School is aware that we practice an Equal Opportunities policy
- Racist views will not be tolerated and will be challenged by all members of staff
- Curriculum, classroom and corridor displays, equipment, books, activities, assemblies, outings etc will be regularly reviewed to ensure that all cultures are presented in a positive way
- We will endeavour to develop cultural awareness by using activities related to language, dress, religion, music and food. We will celebrate the major religions and cultural festivals, involving members of the community and other visitors, where possible.
- We will ensure that food and its preparation, along with eating utensils are acceptable to the religious, cultural and physical needs of learners and staff.
- We will endeavour to cater for the various aspects of physical care that are needed by different cultures (especially care of the skin and hair) and to understand and respect the importance of particular standards and styles of dress in different communities.
- We will raise issues and consider them in our practice to encourage positive action.

Staff Development

In line with the school's Staff Development Policy, the school will help all staff to take advantage of any appropriate training opportunities, where possible.

Where appropriate, staff will have access to training that will help them work in a multicultural environment, including the physical care and dietary needs of specific groups.

All staff need to be aware of the dialect and mother tongues reflected by the learners attending Pen-y-Cwm School. We will use this to further develop learner's communication skills.

Many learners attending Pen-y-Cwm School will need to use Signalong signs and symbols, communication aids, switches, as well as computer support in order to communicate with others.

Positive steps will be taken to provide and share information and reference literature within the school. We realise that it is important to develop a means by which staff can support one another. We encourage staff to share their specialist knowledge, experience and skills with other colleagues in the school.

Parental Relationships

We will involve parents in helping the school develop an understanding of their culture and religion and advise us on ways of reflecting their backgrounds in all aspects of our work.

Parents are encouraged to work with us. The school has a number of mechanisms for actively seeking the views and perceptions of parents about their child. In trying to understand learners' behaviour it is necessary to take into account the home circumstances, along with social and medical history.

We wish to extend our links with community groups, and to promote the contribution of parents and community groups to the life of the school. We offer regular social occasions for parents.

Equal Opportunities at Pen-y-Cwm School

Each class has a group of learners with mixed needs, including some with complex needs who have challenging behaviours, those with sensory impairments and learners with physical disabilities.

We will maximise learner opportunities to access the curriculum relevant to their needs.

Reading Materials

We will ensure that all learners have access to reading materials and experiences regardless of their disability. We are aware of the need for these to be age appropriate.

Curriculum

The school curriculum takes into account the very different and individual needs of all learners. Our aim is the education of the whole person so that learners do not suffer discrimination of any kind on the grounds of sex, ability, uneven development, disability, race, class or religion.

All learners have access to the National Curriculum and additional curriculum areas and therapies that are offered at Pen-y-Cwm School. The Core Curriculum consists of English, Mathematics, Science, ICT and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

In the process of presenting a balanced curriculum we will discuss issues such as race when they appear and where it is appropriate, rather than suppress or avoid them.

PSHE is a core curriculum subject at Pen-y-Cwm School. The scheme of work contains specific learning objectives relating to citizenship and these apply across the school. A greater emphasis will be placed on this aspect as learners move through the school. In particular, learners in the 14+ age group will require extra support to prepare them for citizenship in a society that should have equal opportunities for all. The school's core curriculum promotes the independence of each learner in order that they can reach their full potential.

Any learner with English as a second language will be identified. Support from the LEA and from within the school will be organised so that these learners have full access to the curriculum.

Pen-y-Cwm School's Equal Opportunities Policy will be available to staff, visitors, job applicants, students and parents.

Implementation

Responsibility for the implementation of Pen-y-Cwm School's Equal Opportunities Policy rest with the Head teacher, with all staff working actively together to support the policy.

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with the staff and Governors on an annual basis and in the light of updated legislation.

This policy has been agreed by the Governing Body.

Signed _____
Headteacher

Signed _____
Chair of Governors

Date : October 2015

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