



PEN-Y-CWM SPECIAL SCHOOL

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

(2025/2026)

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Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Introduction and background

Our distinctive character, priorities and aims

1.1 School values

At Pen-y-Cwm School 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 Pen-y-Cwm School 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

Pen-y-Cwm School has been a school since 1976. In September 2007 a primary satellite base was established (24 pupil places) co-located with a local main stream school at Garnlydan, two miles away. In the Autumn Term, November 2012, the school re-located its main site to a new, twenty-first century purpose built accommodation at Strand Annealing Lane, Ebbw Vale, with capacity for 120 pupils. We are co-located with the primary phase of Ebbw Fawr Learning Community.

The new building was specifically built to cater for pupils with a range of additional needs

As such, it is fully DDA compliant.

The school caters for pupils aged between 3 and 19 years with a wide range of learning difficulties. These include: Severe Learning difficulty (SLD), Profound and Multiple learning difficulty (PMLD), Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), as well as various genetic disorders, sensory difficulties and challenging behaviours. All pupils secure a place at school following a multi-agency assessment of their special educational needs. All pupils have an Individual Development Plan (IDP). All pupils have an Outcome Development Plan (ODP). Additional individual plans are in place Eg IBP, PHP for pupils as deemed necessary

Pen-y-Cwm School is the only special school in Blaenau Gwent for children with complex needs and consequently pupils travel to school from across the borough and indeed neighbouring boroughs.

Additional Learning needs of pupils at the school include those who:

- Have special educational needs
- have disabilities
- have medical needs
- have emotional and social behavioural needs and / or mental health needs

Pupils at school are more likely also belong to vulnerable groups including:-

- looked after children
- children and young people in difficult circumstances
- pupils at risk of bullying
- pupils educated otherwise
- pupils with limited communication
- pupils with basic skills needs

1.3 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

As well as the specific actions set out within the strategic equality plan, the school strives to operate equality of opportunity in its day to day practice.

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement and independence.

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;
- including teaching and classroom-based approaches appropriate for the whole school population, which are inclusive and reflective of our pupils
- support and challenge young people to become independent learners;
- create a sense of community so that each member of the school feels valued and supported; and

- provide an environment in which every member of the school community can thrive and embrace the values of learning, tolerance and ambition.

1.4 The Plan

The School Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) is a discreet document which has close links to the School Development Plan (SDP).

Each year relevant targets are exported from the SEP and imported into the SDP. This aims to ensure that school community (pupils, governors, school staff and external partners) focus on one holistic strategic plan enabling them to translate the written plan into purposeful action.

The SEP also has links to the schools: -

- Accessibility plan
- Total Communication policy
- Positive Behaviour policy
- Personal and Social policy
- Healthy Schools plan

The plan was developed via a partnership approach with stakeholders who have a responsibility and interest on pupils at Pen-y-Cwm and included:-

- Visually impaired service
- Hearing impaired service
- Multi-sensory Impaired service
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational therapist
- Speech and language therapist
- Disability Sports service
- Governors
- Parents
- Pupils – School Council led
- Library service
- ICT specialists
- Gwent Ethnic Minority Service (GEMS)
- Local Education Authority

Information was gathered over a long period via drop in sessions, meetings and survey/questionnaires. The outcomes were analysed by the senior leadership team and the designated governor to identify themes and issues arising. Targets were then identified and time scales, personnel and costings added.

The Headteacher discusses the plan regularly with the designated governor who in turn reports to the full governing body on a termly basis.

The documents are published via the school website and are available to stakeholders on requests from the school office.

Displays around school reflect progress towards the relevant targets each year by using photos, captions as well as text.

Section 2 - Identifying, collecting and using relevant information

2.1 Our pupils (September 2025)

Current pupils on roll number

COMPULSORY AGE:

NON COMPULSORY AGE:

Post 16:

GENDER:

Boys: Girls:

FSM: Compulsory age pupils: Whole School:

OUT OF COUNTY PUPILS: Newport: Monmouthshire: Torfaen:

LOOKED AFTER PUPILS:

CHILD PROTECTION REGISTER:

HOME LANGUAGE: Almost all pupils (%) have English as their home language

ETHNICITY: Almost all pupils (%) are White British

Continuous tracking of pupil attainment and achievement data by senior leaders and class teachers show that there is no link between under performance in individual pupils or groups of pupils due to protected characteristics.

2.2 Our staff

Employment Information

Job /Pay Grade	Male	Female	Disabled	Sexual Orientation	Religion	Age
Senior Leadership Team - STPC Leadership scale			0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Teacher - SPTC MP3-6			0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
PCE Teacher (post 16)						
HLTA (Grade 6)			0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
TA Grade 5			0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
TA Grade 4			0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Premises / Admin support team			0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Permanent						
Temporary						
Full time						
Part time						
Applicants	Information held by the local authority					

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

2022 – 2026 PRIORITY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Progress report May 2015

PRIORITIES	STAFF	TIME LINE	CONSULTATION PROCESS	PROGRESS	IMPACT
OBJECTIVE 1. To produce signage in English and Welsh languages, photographs and objects as reference Information to parents and community members.	H/T Specialist TA Welsh Co-ordinator	2022 - 2024	A series of planning meetings were held with local authority officers and Advisory services for Visual and Hearing Impairment. Visits to other special schools in South Wales and England were undertaken by H/T and other staff Meetings were held with a number of providers of signage with BGCBC officers - signage considered	2022 -2023 Pupil communication profile was updated and evaluated on a whole school basis A survey of was undertaken.	There is now a multi-sensory and bilingual signage consistently implemented across the school.
OBJECTIVE 2. Develop a library system which is accessible to pupils with physical and sensory disabilities and Improve the range of reading material, to include a broader range of books to support equality issues and the welsh language	D/HT	2024 -2025	Observations of pupils accessing library were conducted Discussions between school's English Lead teacher and Advisory Library Service staff were undertaken An audit of books was undertaken An analysis of data relating to; groups of pupils including; boys and girls, nature of SEN, Free school meals and Looked After children was undertaken	2024 -2025 Staff identified space and furniture as accessible to pupils with range of needs. English leader and Library service advisory staff, recommend books Audit of books reinforcing ethos of equalities undertaken.	Pupils have improved access to the library books. The library includes a wider range of books for pupils with PMLD – age appropriate sensory stories and books developing knowledge about disability, equal opportunities to access different types of work, different religions and different cultures.
OBJECTIVE 3. Develop staff communication	H/T HLTA Total	2022 - On-going to maintain	Meetings with teaching staff, Speech and Language therapist and Advisory teacher for HI and VI are undertaken	2022 -2023 Speech therapists and Total Communication TA collected	Class observations by senior leaders, speech therapist and class teachers provided data

competencies to support pupils with communication difficulties – identified by the Communication Forum including referral from staff, parents and speech and language therapists	Communication NHS SaLT	provision	to conduct audits of provision. These continue as a regular feature of provision Class observations were conducted by Communication specialist and SaLT during the Autumn term 2022-2023 (and annually after that). Pupil attainment and progress data was gathered and evaluated.	and analysed pupil profile data. Class teachers tracked and reported pupil progress in communication. Observations of the quality communication interactions were undertaken.	of the quality of communication exchanges observed.
OBJECTIVE 4. Improve equality of opportunity for pupils with physical difficulties to have their needs met by improving physiotherapy; Physical programmes identified, training updated for staff, physical literacy addressed	H/T Physiotherapy staff HLTA	2022-2023	An audit of the level of pupil's physical needs was undertaken, in partnership with physiotherapist and class teachers. A programme of training requirements and funding opportunities was identified. Agreements were set up and an action plan implemented	2022 -2024 Leaders across the LA, school, NHS physiotherapy service met over a programme of meetings to discuss data, pupil profile of need, funding streams and action plans.	Pupils with physical needs now receive improved / increased provision focused on their physical development. School now receive additional funding to provide improved physiotherapy / mobility provision. Pupil progress data shows positive performance.
OBJECTIVE 5. Develop the outdoor play areas of new build – class spaces and shared spaces to incorporate more activities and for pupils with physical disabilities	HT – all staff	2022 -2024	A review of the whole school pupil SEN and physical needs profile of school was undertaken and reported to H/T Visits to 4 special school across different authorities in Wales and England. Foundation phase curriculum were	2022 -2024 Observations and data prove that outdoor education engages and motivates pupils very effectively. Action research is undertaken by staff and reports that outdoor activity promotes	The play area at new site includes outdoor classrooms for classes to access outdoor physical activity as frequent feature of curriculum, gym, MUGA area, disabled swing, swing, roundabout, outdoor gym/fitness equipment, sensory garden are in place.

			undertaken to inform action planning	<p>effective learning Disability Sports staff are recruited to support provision on a weekly basis. Pupils are better engaged and motivated by outdoor physical activity (swings and roundabout particularly). Older pupils enjoy outdoor gym area</p> <p>2024 - 25 Disability Sports trained young leaders and bring expertise specifically for pupils have mobility difficulties.</p>	<p>Pupil engagement in physical outdoor learning is high.</p> <p>Effective strategic partnerships have a positive impact on provision</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 6. To extend pupils access to alternative specialist technology to gain access to basic skills opportunities.</p>	<p>HLTA Total Communication</p> <p>NHS SaLT</p> <p>SLA SaLT</p>	2022 - 2024	<p>Data of the communication profile of pupils is collected and evaluated with partners including; speech and language therapist and occupational therapists.</p> <p>Individual pupil progress data is reviewed with. pupils, parents and other professionals informally and formally</p> <p>Research into alternative technology to improve communication outcomes for individual pupils is undertaken.</p>	<p>2022 -2024 Pupil communication data is collected and evaluated. 2024- 2025 Whiteboard technology purchased and used to support pupils with extremely limited physical skills to support assessment of cognitive developments and to develop communication skills. Parents and other professionals work together holistically to embed the programme across home and school.</p>	<p>Individual pupils have improved access to appropriate communication technology.</p> <p>LA Funds are used to purchase equipment.</p> <p>Pupils identified as needing an improved provision demonstrate improved outcomes. Parents and staff are more confident that pupil's individual needs are being met.</p>

ADDITIONAL 2015 - 2016 TARGETS

PRIORITIES	STAFF - who is responsible	TIMELINE - By when	CONSULTATION PROCESS – How this will be achieved	PROGRESS	IMPACT – how will we know when we are successful
Review quality and range of relevant information available to identify any vulnerable group(s)	H/T	2025 -2026	Seek advice and support from local groups / services including; TT consultant, THRIVE consultant, Physical Literacy trainer, Scope, GEMS,	<p>2025 -2026</p> <p>School pupils progress data effectively tracks pupils from vulnerable groups LAC, PDG, SEN, ethnic groups</p> <p>No issues relating to minority groups raised as barrier to progress</p> <p>Advice sought from GEMS team to guide broadening of tracking to include families at risk of de-engagement with school / services</p> <p>Little progress made. Continue work</p>	School is well informed to plan effectively to reduce any disadvantage experienced by a group(s)
Strengthen systems of collecting and analysis fo data for strategic equality plan	H/T Designated Governor	2025 -2026	Seek advice form local auhtoirty, research good practice in other schools in LA and EAS		School meets requiremetns of strategic equality process well

Explore the Anti-bullying strategies and continue with programmes with PC Powell	HLTA	2025 - 2026	Engage with BG to access advice and training relating to the programme	2024 -2025 Bullying, stay safe, substance mis-use themes explored with groups of pupils across the school during Well Being week. Presentation to whole school assembly. SLT member responsible for PSHE conducted an 'audit' of our provision against the programme with the visiting professionals for the group – no gaps in provision identified	All members of the school community feel safe from Hate and Harassment
Further develop outdoor learning environments / opportunities to meet the needs of all pupil	HLTA/Consultant (THRIVE)	2024 -2026	Seek opinions of School Council and Eco Council	2024 – 2025 School council meet regularly to raise issues relating to outdoor opportunities. New initiatives introduced this year include; <u>Access to community opportunities:</u> Pupils with behaviours that present challenge and higher level risks when accessing typical community facilities are now accessing bespoke activities within the community and work experience activities.	All pupils have access to appropriate outdoor learning programme.

APPENDIX

Blaenau Gwent Equality Objectives

The most important part of the 'Equality Promise' **The Council's Equality Objectives:**

Gender Equality

The Council Will Ensure Gender Equality In Pay Within The Workplace. This Will Be Demonstrated Through Equality in Pay and Pay Distribution within the Workforce. (Executive Member for Resources)

How this will be achieved:

Through monitoring of workforce profile and taking positive steps via a Cabinet approved policy to reduce any significant inequality.

By when: This will be an ongoing process with targets that will be reported to Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee on an annual basis.

The Council in Collaboration with Other Stakeholders Will Work To Reduce Domestic Abuse Within the Blaenau Gwent Community and Improve Its Service Response to Victims Of Domestic Violence. (Executive Member for Corporate Governance and Community Safety)

How this will be achieved:

By monitoring the levels of incidence of domestic abuse in Blaenau Gwent and taking steps via Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee approved policy to alter and develop the service response where insufficient reduction is achieved.

By when: This will be an ongoing process with targets that will be reported to Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee on an annual basis.

Disability Equality

The Council Will Work To Reduce The Economic Disadvantage And Poverty Faced By Many Disabled People As A Result Of Reduced Access To The Opportunity For Work And

Insufficient Welfare Support. –

(Executive Member for Health, Social Care, Well Being and Equalities)

How this will be achieved:

Through employment, poverty alleviation and regeneration projects that have a specific emphasis toward reducing the inequality experienced by disabled people.

By when: This will be an ongoing process with improvement targets set that, the achievement of which will be reported to Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee on an annual basis

**We Will Improve Access to Council's Buildings and Services.
(Executive Member for Resources)**

How this will be achieved:

Through building physical accessibility improvements into the standard estate management process.

By when: This will be an ongoing process with targets that will be reported to Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee on an annual basis.

We Will Work To Improve Accessibility To Quality And Timely Housing Suitable To The Needs Of Disabled People. (Executive Member for Health, Social Care, Well Being and Equalities)

How this will be achieved:

Annual improvement targets will be set to improve the housing provision waiting time 'gap' for disabled people and policy or process developed to achieve this.

By when: This will be an ongoing process which will be reported to Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee on an annual basis.

Race Equality

We Will Work Toward Narrowing The Gap In Educational Participation And Achievement

For Children For Who It Is Demonstrable Are Disadvantaged In The Education System.

(Executive Member for Children and Young People)

How this will be achieved:

Positive intervention projects will continue to be developed by the LEA and performance improvement targets set.

By when: This will be an ongoing process, progress on which will be reported to Cabinet Equalities Sub-Committee on an annual basis.

We will work to ensure that all people feel safe, and specifically work to reduce, detect and respond to hate crimes and harassment.

We will consider all groups that can be affected by hate crime this being: age, race, disability, religion and sexual orientation and transgender. Executive member for corporate governance and community staff

For further information:

If you have any questions, please contact:

Mrs D Herald, Headteacher