

St Brigid's School



Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2018

Strategic Equality Plan agreed by Governors:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Hannigan', is written over a faint, light-colored grid background.

A. Hannigan Chair of Governors

Date March 2017

Scheme due for review: September 2018

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1. Our Distinctive Character, priorities and Aims

1.1 School values

At St Brigid's 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. Our Catholic ethos underpins everything we do as a school and this is reflected in this policy.

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 St Brigid's School, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. Our School vision is 'To inspire and be inspired through Love, Faith, Truth, Respect and Excellence' and all staff and pupils strive to use this as the model for their attitudes and behaviour.

1.2 Characteristics of our school

St Brigid's school is a Voluntary Aided Catholic school which is not formally recognised by the Diocese of Wrexham but which has Christian and Catholic teachings at its heart.

Figures for 2015 – 2016 academic year:

Number of pupils (Foundation Phase to KS4) = 408

Number Boys = 153 Number of Girls = 255

Pupils are predominantly White/British = 90% (Other = 10%)

Our percentage of statutory school age pupils eligible for Free School Meals is 7.1%

Additional learning needs pupils for whole school population: School Action = 15.9% School Action Plus 8.3% and statemented 3.4%

Academic standards are high:

2015-16

100% Outcome 5+ Foundation Phase Indicator at Foundation Phase

100% Level 4+ Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2

94.6% Level 5+ Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3

83.3% A* - C Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 4

The majority of our Key Stage 5 pupils go onto Higher Education and aspirations are high across the school.

1.3 Mainstreaming equality into policy and practice

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 and carers 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

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.

Protected Characteristics:

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership

In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couple. [\[1\]](#) This will also be true in Scotland when the relevant legislation is brought into force. [\[2\]](#)

Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act).

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

[1] Section 1, Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.

[2] Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014.

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:

- the regional 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 incoming pupil data, e.g. attainment data of Looked After Children;
- the nature of being a school in Wales and the need to ensure the Welsh element is protected

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.10) and Appendix 2**.

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

2.3 Staff – teaching and non-teaching

The school regards equality 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, racism or homophobia, 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:

- 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;
- behaviour 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.

In the preparing this scheme we consulted staff, pupils (via School Council), Governors and Parents.

As a predominantly White British School it was difficult to access all groups for consultation (e.g. people with various disabilities, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and people from Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) and faith groups, but we attempted to access as many as possible through the groups mentioned in the first paragraph.

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 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.

5. Objectives and Action Plan

Our chosen Equality Objectives are:

- 1. To provide equal access to the full curriculum and services for Looked After Children in our school*
- 2. To challenge stereotyping and or bullying, in particular in relation to LGBT pupils*

The actions to be taken in respect of the above objectives are listed in the School Equality Plan covering all relevant protected characteristics (Appendix 2). These describe how we are taking action to fulfil both the general and specific duties.

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

The action plan shows:

- 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 planning. 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 by September 2018.

St Brigid's School

Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2018

Appendices

- App. 1 Regional Equality Objectives**
- App. 2 School Equality Objectives and Action Plan**
- App. 3 Current school Access Plan**

Regional Equality Objectives

Denbighshire County Council Strategic Objectives

DCC's equality objectives are:

- reducing health inequalities
- reducing unequal outcomes in education to maximise individual potential
- reducing inequalities in employment and pay
- reducing inequalities in personal safety
- reducing inequalities in representation and voice
- reducing inequalities in access to information, services, buildings and the environment
- managing identified equality and fairness issues as part of our business planning and performance management framework

Strategic Equality Plan 2016 – 2018
Equality Objectives and Action Plan

Equality Objectives				
<p>1. To provide equal access to the full curriculum and services for Looked After Children (LAC) in our school</p> <p>2. To challenge stereotyping and or bullying, in particular in relation to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) pupils</p>				
Our Research:				
<p>1. We now have 6 Looked After Children in school after a period of not having any – their attainment and welfare is a priority</p> <p>2. There is a rise in transgender pupils in Denbighshire and across Wales – staff and pupils need to be educated in safeguarding, welfare and compliance with legal requirements to ensure any LGBT pupils in our school are free from stereotyping and or bullying.</p>				
Information from Engagement:				
All stakeholders were happy with the plan.				
Data Development:				
<p>Progress of LAC pupils in Year 7 compared to all other groups</p> <p>Official logs of anti LGBT incidents on SIMS</p>				
This objective will be judged to be successful if...				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is evidence to demonstrate comparable improvement for LAC pupils / non LAC • There is an understanding of LGBT issues and no serious LGBT related bullying incidents on SIMS 				
Actions:				
	Description	Responsibility	Start date	End date
1.1	Target LAC pupils to ensure comparable attainment to non LAC of the same ability. Train staff in particular LAC needs.	RJ/LP	Sept 2016	July 2018
1.2	Train staff in LGBT issues and legal requirements. Give ongoing training and support to pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4.	RJ / LP / VIVA	Sept 2016	July 2018