

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 14 March 2022</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Draft Strategic Equality Plans for Schools
Purpose of Report:	To seek Cabinet approval of the draft School’s Strategic Equality Plan for 2022 - 2024 – ‘Working together for a fairer future’ as the basis for consultation.
Report Owner:	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration
Responsible Officer:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Martine Coles, Vulnerable Groups Manager Morwen Hudson, Head of Standards and Provision Tom Bowring, Head of Policy & Business Transformation This will involve consultation with Scrutiny Committees and with partners.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft School’s Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix A) demonstrates that the Vale of Glamorgan is a diverse and actively anti-racist Council. The development of the draft Plan demonstrates how the Council can bridge the gap between policies/ guidance and turn this into tangible action. It provides meaningful adherence to the public sector Equality Duty (the ‘general duty’) and the specific duties for Wales. The Equality Act 2010 makes it clear that discrimination is not to be tolerated in society. The purpose of the draft Plan is to describe what schools are doing to fulfil their duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the ‘general duty’.</li> <li>• The development of the draft School’s Strategic Equality Plan, supports the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024, especially Equality Objective 4, ‘help staff know more about equality law, and staff and the public to understand the needs of protected groups.’</li> <li>• The Equality Act 2010 lists schools as public authorities with certain duties. This means that when schools carry out their public function, they must have due regard to the need to:</li> </ul>	

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Having due regard for advancing equality involves:
  - removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics and those who do not;
  - taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
  - encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- This report seeks Cabinet approval for the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan as the basis for consultation as described in this report.

## **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet considers and approves the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix A) as the basis for consultation as described in this report.
2. That Cabinet approves the consultation approach and timetable as set out in this report.
3. That Cabinet refers this report and appendix to Scrutiny Committee (Learning and Culture) as part of the programme of consultation.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To enable Cabinet to consider the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan (2022-24).
2. To ensure that effective consultation is undertaken within the Equality Act 2010.
3. To ensure that the relevant Scrutiny Committee has the opportunity to consider the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan and provide feedback as part of the programme of consultation.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision for the Vale of Glamorgan, its values and main priorities. The priorities of the Corporate Plan help make communities in the Vale of Glamorgan more equal. The equality objectives in the Corporate Strategic Equality Plan support this work to make the Council more equal. The objectives in the Corporate Strategic Equality Plan and draft School's Strategic Equality Plan have been aligned to demonstrate their integration.
- 1.2 A variety of sources have been used to gather the information needed to produce the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan. These include:
  - The Equality and Human Rights Commission's national research reports 'Is Wales Fairer? 2018 (an update on previous research in 'Is Wales Fairer? 2015' and 'How Fair is Wales? 2011');
  - information from Council documents such as the Corporate Plan;
  - local information and data;
  - consultation with stakeholders, including feedback on the corporate equality objectives from people representative of one or more of the protected groups through engagement and consultation between May 2019 and January 2020;
  - equality objectives of the Welsh Government; and
  - information from the Equality and Human Rights Commission Wales.
- 1.3 There is a range of supplementary policies, principles and legislation that underpin the draft Plan for schools. They include:
  - School Accessibility Strategy Action Plan;

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to support the development of pupil voice;
- Welsh Government anti-bullying guidance;
- Central South Consortium: Enabling Equity and Excellence;
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum Working Group: Final Report; and
- LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** The Council has engaged with a range of stakeholders to draft the School's Strategic Equality Plan (Appendix A). The stakeholders included Central South Consortium, Corporate Equalities, Welsh Local Government Association, other Local Authorities, School Councils, parents and carers, Headteachers (HTs) of schools in the Vale of Glamorgan, children and young people.
- 2.2** This engagement process included:
- Draft shared with HTs and their feedback collated. (June and July 2021)
  - Shared updated draft with WLGA to undertake a peer review to quality assure the draft Plan for schools (July and August 2021)
  - Engaged with children and young people, parents/carers, other stakeholders. (September -October 2021)
  - Created a pupil and parent/carer friendly version (October 2021)
  - Finalised draft School's Strategic Equality Plan for formal consultation (December 2021)
- 2.3** The feedback put forward by the different stakeholders was instrumental in formulating of the draft Plan, to make it as inclusive as possible.
- 2.4** The draft Plan is structured so as to provide an overview of equality in a school setting. The draft Plan sets out the purpose of the document, within the context of the Equality Act 2010. There is guidance on how schools can fulfil duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector Equality Duty (the 'general duty') and the specific duties for Wales.
- 2.5** In the draft Plan, schools are expected to identify their values and vision considering the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#).
- 2.6** The Strategic Equality Objectives set out are aligned with the revised [Corporate Plan 2020-2025](#) and [Corporate Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024](#).
- 2.7** The draft Plan includes two strategic equality objectives:
- Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.

- Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to address attainment gaps for children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.
- 2.8** For each objective, an overview of the particular focus for people with protected characteristics is provided alongside a description of the expected outcomes to be achieved, the specific actions that will be undertaken and an overview of how progress will be monitored.
- 2.9** There was positive feedback from stakeholders that the proposals put forward as part of drafting the Plan to date have considered local and national equality priorities. This supports schools to provide actively inclusive education provision. The feedback was clear from parents, carers and young people. There was a clear ambition from these stakeholders for the draft Plan to be accessible in an easier to read version.

### **Consultation Process**

- 2.10** Cabinet Members are requested to consider and approve the draft Plan as the basis for formal consultation as described below:
- Report to Cabinet for consultation process (March 2022)
  - Formally issue the draft Plan to schools for consultation (March - April 2022)
  - Report to Scrutiny Committee (Learning & Culture) as part of consultation (April 2022) Translation of draft plan (April 2022)
  - Launch public consultation and promote (April 2022)
  - Review consultation feedback and amend Plan (May 2022)
  - Report to Cabinet for approval (May 2022) Presentation to headteachers of the Plan (and dissemination to all staff) (Summer 2022)
- 2.11** Cabinet is requested to approve the consultation process above to enable the Plan to be finalised and issued by Summer 2022.
- 2.12** Cabinet is recommended to refer this report and appendix to Scrutiny Committee (Learning & Culture) as part of the programme of consultation.

## **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-25 contains a series of commitments to equality, including the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024, especially Equality Objective 4.
- 3.2** In the development of the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan, there has been consideration of the "Five Ways of Working" that make up the sustainable development principle within the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- 3.3** Long term - how schools must balance short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs and in this context to ensure pupils' equality of all backgrounds is supported.

- 3.4 Prevention - how schools can act now to prevent problems occurring or getting worse.
- 3.5 Integration - how schools consider how their own choice of objectives may impact on other objectives or the objectives of other public bodies.
- 3.6 Collaboration - how schools can work in collaboration with children, young people and parents/carers to help meet their equality objectives.
- 3.7 Involvement- how a school involves its children and young people in making objectives, and how it ensures that those involved reflect the diversity of the school itself.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1 The cost of the consultation and drafting School's Strategic Equality Plan has been met from within the existing Learning and Skills budget.

### **Employment**

- 4.2 There are no direct employment implications associated with this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3 The actions set out in the draft School's Strategic Equality Plan ensure that the Council complies with legislation, providing adherence to the public sector Equality Duty (the 'general duty') and the specific duties for Wales. The aim of this Plan is to have a positive impact on the population of the Vale of Glamorgan.

## **5. Background Papers**

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[Public sector Equality Duty](#)

[Specific duties for Wales](#)

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

[Is Wales Fairer? \(2018\)](#)

[Welsh Government anti-bullying guidance](#)

[Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum Working Group: Final Report](#)

Central South Consortium: Enabling Equity and Excellence (The Enabling Equity and Excellence document will be refreshed periodically, [access the latest copy of the document here.](#))

[An Anti-Racist Wales: The Race Equality Action Plan for Wales](#)

[LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales](#)

[Vale of Glamorgan Annual equality reports](#)

[Well-being of Future Generations Act.](#)

[Corporate Plan 2020-2025](#)

[Corporate Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024](#)



# Working together for a fairer future

Name of School's

Strategic Equality Plan 2022 – 2024

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for example: a larger font; on different colour paper

You can ask for this document in Welsh.



# **Working together for a fairer future**

**Name of School's**

## **Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024**

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## Introduction

School to replace / amend with statement from Board of Governors and Headteacher.

Include:

- School background
- Use the school prospectus for pertinent school information
- Contextual information

It is with a great deal of pride that we are introducing the School's Strategic Equality Plan for 2022 – 2024 – '**Working together for a fairer future**'. Equalities is best taught in the context of UK law, where all protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 are included in a curriculum that accepts difference. So not only people of different sexual orientations are welcome in our school, people of different ethnicities, genders, gender identities, religions, ages and abilities are also most welcome.

Schools play an important role in ensuring an education for every child and young person, considering a range of needs. Schools support the well-being in their pupils and develop an ethos where learners feel everyone is included. This Plan sets out the equality agenda for our school for the next two years. We must consider how our actions and decisions will affect future generations.

Under the Equality Act 2010, schools demonstrate how they are tackling homophobic bullying, teaching about different families and promoting positive values to create global citizens. Schools must deliver a curriculum that enables learners to understand the benefits that exist in society where diversity and difference is accepted. All schools aim to support the well-being in their pupils and developing an ethos where learners feel everyone is included will support this.

It is only by working together, listening and respecting each other that we can successfully meet the many challenges facing our communities and public services today. To achieve this Plan and to meet the diverse needs of our communities, we will need to work in partnership.

We need to think about what and how we deliver educational provision. We must consider the diverse needs of our school population whether that be due to their protected characteristics and/ or their financial circumstances.

We are an ambitious and forward-thinking school. I am confident that pupils, parents, carers, staff, our Governing Body, the community and all those with a stake in our school can continue 'working together for a fairer future'. All people, regardless of race, religion, sex, gender assignment, sexual orientation, age must feel welcome in our school, with our clear ethos that spells out acceptance.

**Name**

**Name**

**Chair of Governing Body**

**Headteacher**

## Purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan

The [Equality Act 2010](#) makes it clear that discrimination is not to be tolerated in society. The purpose of this Strategic Equality Plan is to describe what the school is doing to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the [public sector Equality Duty](#) (the 'general duty') and the [specific duties for Wales](#).

The public sector equality duty covers eight protected characteristics:

Age	Race
Disability	Religion or Belief
Gender Reassignment	Sex
Pregnancy and Maternity	Sexual Orientation

The duty applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only for having due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination. The Equality Act lists schools as public authorities with certain duties. This means that when we carry out our public function, we must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

- encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

To identify the priorities, we work in partnership with:

- Pupils
- School Council
- Parents and carers
- Headteachers of schools in the Vale of Glamorgan
- Governing Body
- Local Authority and Regional Consortia

We plan to use this information to help us improve the way we provide educational services and employ people.

Our School's Strategic Equality Plan 202X–202X has been written to integrate with the Council's [Corporate Plan 2020-2025](#) and [Corporate Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024](#). The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's vision for the Vale of Glamorgan, its values and main priorities. The priorities of the Corporate Plan will help make communities in the Vale of Glamorgan more equal. The equality objectives in the Corporate Strategic Equality Plan will support this work and it is for this reason that the objectives of both plans have been aligned. Our own Strategic Equality Plan aligns with these documents where relevant and appropriate.

## Vision and values

School to add its own vision and values here.

Our values are consistent with the five ways of working central to the [Well-being of Future Generations Act](#). They are long term, they work together, and involve working with others. Our values will support a greater focus on prevention as we work to deliver our vision. Our equality priorities consider the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and will help us to contribute to the Welsh Government's well-being goals, including creating a more equal Wales.

## Equality objectives – what we will do

### **Strategic Equality Objective**

- Improve how we involve, engage, and communicate with protected groups about our work and decisions.

### **Protected characteristics**

This benefits all protected groups, but we will focus on disabled, people from ethnic minorities, women and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

### **Expected outcomes**

Stakeholders have information about the improvements and the opportunity for input to support progress.

### **Actions**

As a school we will:

1. Promote and facilitate termly school council meetings.
2. Take steps to ensure that school council is representative of the school's learners across protected characteristics.
3. Use an innovative range of 'pupil voice groups' which focus on shared rights and responsibilities.
4. Ensure communications to parents and carers are delivered in plain, easy to understand language.
5. Progress against actions identified within the school's accessibility strategy will be included within this strategy's annual report.
6. Ensure our staff and the Governing Body receive equality and diversity training, which will include Equality Impact Assessment training and awareness.

**How we will know how we are doing**

1. Information and data on how engagement has been used to improve outcomes for protected groups and socio-economic disadvantaged groups.
2. Information and data on the number of school staff who have received equality, race, and disability training.

## **Strategic Equality Objective**

Develop and implement plans throughout the life of this plan to address attainment gaps for children and young people and provide support to overcome barriers to them reaching their full potential.

### **Protected characteristics**

This benefits all protected groups.

'Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that attainment gaps persist for pupils in receipt of free school meals and children with additional learning needs. (Education)

Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that young women and girls, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children and children with additional learning needs are more likely to be at risk of experiencing identity-based bullying. (Education)

Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that poorer children, children with additional learning needs, White children and children of mixed ethnicity have higher than average exclusion rates. (Education)

Is Wales Fairer 2018' reports that subject choices remain highly gendered, with girls being much less likely to continue studying science and mathematics after school. (Education)

### **Expected outcomes**

Reduction in attainment gaps.

Programmes in place to tackle identity-based bullying.

Reduced exclusion rates for children with certain protected characteristics, including disabled children and mixed ethnicity children.

### **Actions**

As a school we will:



1. Deliver and evaluate programmes and interventions aimed at addressing attainment gaps to make sure they have a positive impact on socio-economic disadvantage, disability, sex, race, other protected characteristics and young carers.
2. Seek to minimise exclusion rates for children with certain protected characteristics, including socio-economic disadvantage, ethnicity and disability.
3. Analyse bullying data gathered by schools, including racist bullying, to identify trends and review anti-bullying strategies so that there are effective solutions in place.
4. Provide opportunities to explore equality, diversity and community cohesion within a curriculum throughout the year e.g. equality related stimuli, using texts which explore both historical and present day local, national, and international equality, diversity and community cohesion.
5. Use inclusive resources which are actively inclusive, including anti-racist and promote multilingual resources, such as 'Giglets'.
6. Work with partners to deliver programmes which support people to prepare for employment.

### **How we will know how we are doing**

1. Information and data on how programmes and interventions have affected attainment gaps on children and young people with protected characteristics and who are socio-economically disadvantaged.
2. Information and data on number of children excluded by protected characteristic and socio-economic disadvantage.
3. Analysis of school bullying data showing trends and review of anti-bullying strategies to address findings.
4. Information and data on outcomes of programmes supporting people to prepare for employment.

## Monitoring Progress & Publishing Results

Our School will continue to check on progress towards meeting our equality objectives and report on this each year to the Governing Body in our annual equality monitoring report. This is published on our website and includes an assessment of the effectiveness of the steps we are taking to meet the equality objectives.

This may be complemented by other equality and employment information each year that is published annually.

### For More Information

#### **Visit our website**

School website address

#### **Social Media**

Keep up to date with all the latest news, events and information from our School, follow:

@School on Twitter or Facebook.

If you have a query, please contact us:

- Email school email address
- or call school telephone number