

BRYNHYFRYD PRIMARY SCHOOL



Ysgol Gynradd Brynhyfryd Primary School

"Breuddwydio, credu, llwyddo gyda'n gilydd!"

"Dream, believe, achieve together!"

Brynhyfryd Primary School is a Rights Respecting School

SCHOOL POLICY DOCUMENT

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

Approved by Governors:

Review:

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A. Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on all public sector organisations to promote disabled equality. There are six inter-related parts to this duty, also known as 'the general' duty or 'disability equality duty' (DED). In carrying out their functions, public authorities must have due regard to the need to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- Eliminate disability-related harassment;
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- Take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others.

The main aim of the DED is to get us to think and act proactively on disability equality issues from the outset. This will help us to identify where and how barriers are created to the equal participation of disabled users of our services, as well as current and potential staff. This is not just about physical/sensory barriers but also barriers which are created by the way services, policies or practices are designed.

The DED comprises two parts – the general duty and the specific duties. The general duty is an overarching framework that asks organisations to respond to the six requirements listed above.

The Disability Equality Scheme links to the schools Equal Opportunities Policy and Accessibility Plan and the Disability Statement.

B. Commitment

Brynhyfryd Primary School seeks to put learners first. We have always been firmly committed to the principles of inclusive learning and meeting the educational needs of our pupils irrespective of their ability, gender, ethnicity or social and economic circumstances. This underpins the schools philosophy and educational ethos. Hence, the school seeks to encourage equality in all that it does. The commitment to ensuring disability equality will be reflected in our service provision and as an employer.

We believe it is important that all staff across the school implement the same approach and form a common understanding of the social model. This scheme outlines the work that will be needed to develop this common understanding and our approach to staff and pupil care and service provision.

The schools' commitment to equality in opportunity is reflected in its 'Policy for Equal Opportunities' with its aim to develop a culture which promotes equality of opportunity that encourages everyone to fulfil his/her potential and achieves our mission.

C. Implementing the duty

Implementing the duty will help close the gap between the expectations, experiences, education, qualifications and employment of disabled and non-disabled people. It will enable the school to continue to:

- Create a positive atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to value diversity and respect difference.
- Deliver a first class service. We have an inclusive ethos, and recognise that the best lessons take place where teaching and learning responds to the needs of individual learners.
- Achieve a more representative workforce, recruiting from a wider pool of applicants.
- Meet the requirements of funding, audit and inspection bodies.
- Promote a greater knowledge and understanding of disability among all school users which will benefit society at large.

D. Key features of a Disability Equality Scheme

The key feature of the specific duties is a requirement to produce a Disability Equality Scheme and publish it by 1st April 2007. The essential elements of the Scheme are:-

- A statement of how disabled people have been involved in developing the Scheme.
The involvement of disabled people is critical and should be properly documented and evidenced.
- An action plan that sets out the steps that the school will take to comply with the general duty. (This should reflect all aspects of school life – policies, procedures and services as well as teaching and learning issues).
- Arrangements for gathering information about the performance of the school on disability equality.
- Arrangements for assessing the impact of the activities of the school on disability equality. (All major policies, practices and procedures – i.e. admissions etc should be impact assessed for disability and all new policies from 1st April 2007 onwards should be assessed before they are finalised. The Impact Assessments should be publicly available upon request).
- Details of how the school is going to use the information gathered, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and preparing subsequent schemes.

1. Involvement of Disabled People

Engaging with disabled people is not only a legal requirement of the duty but will bring great benefit in terms of expertise to our school. It can, for example:

- Identify barriers in the school that should be dismantled in order to make the changes necessary for greater inclusion and equality for disabled people;
- Increase our effectiveness in identifying and prioritising disability equality initiatives;
- Improve staff satisfaction and morale;
- Improve learner satisfaction and success rates.

Involving disabled people in implementing our DES can be mutually beneficial. The school gains by obtaining a clearer understanding of how to improve our service to disabled staff and learners, which benefits the organisation as a whole.

Brynhyfryd Primary School aims to involve disabled staff and learners in a number of ways.

Staff/Learner Focus Group

The Group, comprising disabled staff and learners and invited professionals meet to review and monitor disability issues and gather information which feeds into the Disability Equality Scheme.

Learner/Staff Surveys

Disabled learners and staff will be encouraged to complete a disability equality questionnaire to share their views and identify issues related to disability equality in the school.

Disability Equality Group

Made up of key staff with and without disabilities. The terms of reference are:

- To keep abreast of new legislation referring to disability concerning staff and student issues in the school.
- To prepare and amend policies relating to the Disability Discrimination Act and to meet the requirements of legislation.
- To update the Disability Discrimination Act action plan annually.
- To review statistics and make recommendations.
- To identify and recommend relevant staff training.
- To conduct Impact Assessments where applicable.
- To organise the Student Focus Group.

Action plan

Brynhyfryd Primary School's aim through the action plan is to embed Disability Equality in the school. The action plan sets out all the action we have identified for the next three years. Each action has a measurable outcome and identifies a target date, resources required and the person(s) responsible. The plan will be monitored and amended by the Disability Equality Group.

To achieve the aim of embedding Disability Equality in the school, a number of objectives have been identified:

- To raise awareness of the general public, pupils and staff to the scheme.
- To monitor the implementation of the scheme.
- To provide adequate resources and information in an accessible format.
- To embed the scheme in all curriculum areas.
- To gather information and carry out disability equality impact assessments.

3. Gathering information

To monitor disability equality the school will collate information on:

- The recruitment, retention and career development of disabled staff;
- The participation, retention and achievement of disabled pupils;
- Incidents of harassment of disabled pupils/staff;
- The clarity and fairness of policies, procedures and practices to disabled pupils and staff;
- Accessibility of the schools building and resources to disabled persons.

4. Impact assessments

The purpose of an impact assessment is to ensure that activities do not disadvantage disabled people and that, wherever possible, we might promote better equality of opportunity. The assessment should also consider where the different aspects of the disability equality duty might be built into our policies and procedures.

The school aims to undertake equality impact assessments for the duration of the scheme to assess the impact of the school policies, procedures, functions and activities on staff and pupils. This will ensure that due regard is given to disability equality in decision-making and activities, and assist in mainstreaming disability equality into all decisions. The aim will be to ensure that our decisions and activities do not disadvantage disabled people and to identify where we might better promote equality of opportunity.

The school will publish guidance to all staff on impact assessments, as well as continuing to provide training to staff on equality impact assessing.

The school will publish a strategy of the policies and processes that we shall be impact assessing over the next year.

5. Use of information gathered

The school will use information and statistics gathered annually on all pupils and staff to monitor participation, retention and achievement and to determine any areas where disability equality needs addressing. We will determine the extent to which we take into account the needs and the effect of their policies and practices on disabled people by using a variety of information gathering strategies including focus groups, questionnaires etc. Action identified as a result of the information gathering processes will be included in the Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan. Progress against action points will be reviewed during the academic year by the Disability Equality Group.

Expertise will be drawn from external organisations to address any needs identified and these will be included in the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

Information gathered on all staff will be used to determine areas for development. Practices and policies to determine the effect on the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees and potential employees will be reviewed. A range of policies, practices and resources are in place with regard to the promotion of disability equality and the employment of disabled staff. Interviewers

ask if there are any individual needs for interview and the focus of the interview is on the applicant's ability to do the job.

When short listing occurs, information relating to an individual's disabilities is removed from the application form so this is unknown to the manager when short listing.

F. Division of Responsibilities

Governors are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of their responsibilities as outlined in this Policy in relation to equal opportunities for learners with disabilities.
- They receive information on the disabilities of learners and staff.
- They receive a copy of the Annual Action Plan for Disability Equality.

Disability Equality Group are responsible for ensuring that:

- The school's Strategic Plan includes a commitment to opportunities for disabled pupils.
- The school will promote equal opportunities for disabled pupils.
- The procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff ensure good practice in equal opportunities.
- All aspects of school policies and activities are sensitive to disability equality issues.
- Staff are aware of this policy and duties in relation to disability equality legislation.
- Teaching observation reports ensure issues around inclusivity are addressed.
- Disability equality group monitoring information is collected and analysed and impact assessments carried out.
- The schools publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages.
- Induction programmes reflect the schools commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Appropriate training and development is provided to support the appreciation and understanding of diversity and the needs of learners with disabilities.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of the schools duties in relation to disability equality legislation and aware of this Policy.
- They receive the appropriate training for supporting learners with disabilities.

G. Publicising our Policy

To the public:

- Our commitment will be made known via publication in the prospectus, recruitment packs and the schools website.
- All will be made aware of the process to be followed by anyone suffering from discrimination.

To staff:

- All staff will be made aware of the Disability Equality Policy and Scheme.
- All new staff will receive a copy of the Policy and scheme during their induction.
- Results of staff monitoring will be submitted to the Governors.

H. Review and Consultation

- The policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice, by the Disability Equality Group.
- As part of the initial review the following groups will be consulted:
 - External Agencies
 - Disabled learners and staff
 - Disability Equality Group
 - Governing Body

I. Complaints

- The school will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment.
- Acts of discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.
- Staff or pupils who feel they are being discriminated against on grounds of disability should raise the matter under the Grievance/Harassment Procedure, which will, if the accusation is upheld, be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.