



ABERTILLERY 3-16 LEARNING COMMUNITY

SCHOOL STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2023-2027

Date of approval by the governing body:	Autumn 2023
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Contents

Section		Insert Page Numbers
1.	Foreword	3
2.	Introduction	4
3.	Our School Context	4
4.	Integrating Equality into other Statutory and Non Statutory Policies	5
5.	Aims of the Strategic Equality Plan	5
6.	Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duties	6
7.	Roles and Responsibilities	7
8.	Engagement	8
9.	Data Analysis and Evaluation	8
10.	Equality Impact Assessments	9
11.	Staff Professional Learning	9
12.	Equality Objectives	10
13.	Gender Pay Objective	10
14.	Publishing and Monitoring Results	10
15.	Strategic Leadership	11
Appendix 1	Strategic Equality Plan	

Section 1: Foreword

At Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community we fully recognise our duties and responsibilities to eliminate discrimination and promote equality for all learners, employees, members of the school community and service users regardless of protected characteristics.

We fully support the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and the need for protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics as set out in the 2010 Act.

Our Strategic Equality Plan has been informed by the views of our learners, parents/carers, staff, governors and wider community so that we ensure that it robustly addresses priorities for improvement and that equity and equality underpins everything that we do as an education provider and an employer. This Plan sets out our Equality Objectives for a four-year period from 2023 – 2027 and the actions we will take to reduce identified inequalities, improve outcomes and to foster good relations within school and beyond the school gates. As a community school, ensuring that everyone associated with the school is treated with care, respect and dignity is at the core of everything we do.

The school and governing body, will collect, analyse and publish information about our progress in achieving our Equality Objectives as outlined in the Plan, and the three aims of the 2010 Equality Act. These will be shared and published so that there is transparency and accountability. We will also aim to engage with our school community and wider partners to ensure that our Plan and the actions we take make a difference to the lives of individuals with protected characteristics in our school and to members of our school community.

Tracey Jarvis & Kate Olsen
HEADTEACHER & DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Darryl Tovey
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Section 2: Introduction

In Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community, we recognise the importance of diversity and strive to promote an inclusive culture and ethos in which all learners, parents/carers, staff and members of the school and wider community are welcomed and supported to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their background or protected characteristics (e.g., age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation).

Our school values support the development of equality for all due to its strong focus on supporting the wellbeing and achievement of all pupils and where all members of the school community are treated fairly and with respect and dignity. At ALC, when we are ready, respectful and responsible, everything is possible.

Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community ensures that difference is valued and there is a widely held belief that permeates across our policies, actions and behaviours that diversity enriches our lives and experiences. As a school community we are committed to identifying and overcoming any barriers to learning and engagement, and to ensuring that all members of our school community achieve their potential.

The Policy and Strategic Equality Plan highlights our Statement of Intent that as a school we do not tolerate any forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or bullying and harassment in any form. We are committed to championing equality and to ensuring that necessary adjustments are made to ensure the active participation of all pupils in the life of our school.

It is our firm belief that all pupils should be able to learn and develop fully in a truly diverse and inclusive environment and should be supported to achieve their potential, in order to support our own mission, 'Rising Aspirations, Realising Potential, Securing Futures'.

Section 3: Our School Context

Abertillery Learning Community is an English-medium 3 to 16 all-age school, maintained by Blaenau Gwent local authority. There are currently 1641 pupils on roll with 773 in the secondary department and 868 pupils over four separate sites in the primary department.

The school serves communities in and around the town of Abertillery. Over 24% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average of 17% for secondary schools and 19% for primary schools.

Very few pupils receive support to learn English as an additional language or come from a minority ethnic background. The school hosts two resource bases, one at the secondary site and one at a primary site, for around 50 pupils with complex educational needs.

Currently, about 2.2% of pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is higher than the national average. Less than 1% of pupils speak Welsh fluently.

The headteacher has been in post since April 2023. The senior leadership consists of one deputy headteacher, one director of learning, four heads of school, six assistant headteachers and three associate assistant headteachers within the secondary phase

As a school we are committed to partnership working with our families, external agencies and wider communities. We work collaboratively with all our partners to ensure that our pupils have access to the right support at the right time.

Section 4: Integrating Equality into Statutory and Non Statutory Policies

Our commitment to equality underpins all school policies, processes and procedures. There are a number of key statutory and non-statutory policies that strongly reflect the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and where there is significant alignment with this Policy and Plan. These include the: Pupil Discipline/Anti-Bullying Policy; ALN Policy; Safeguarding Policy; Curriculum Policy; and the Complaints Policy. Each of these policies can be requested and viewed at any point via our website www.abertillery3-16.co.uk.

Section 5: Aims of the Strategic Equality Plan

All schools are required to have a detailed Strategic Equality Plan to ensure that the legal requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales are met.

The purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan is to fulfil the duties to provide equality for individuals with protected characteristics and to ensure that fairness and equality is at the heart of everything we do at all levels within our school and community.

Section 6: Equality Act (2010) and Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales

The Equality Act (2010) outlines the requirement of all schools to meet three key aims which includes:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;

- Advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In order to fulfil these three key aims, we are required by law to produce a Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives every four years. To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act, our school will:

- Collect, analyse and publish information about the progress we have made in achieving the three aims of the 2010 Equality Act,
- Self-evaluate effectively and decide on specific and measurable Equality Objectives that we are published and actively pursued over four-year interval to secure positive outcomes; and
- Engage with all key stakeholders, including learners, parents/carers, staff and the wider community to shape, inform and evaluate the effectiveness of our Strategic Equality Plan.

The Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and requires schools to take action to improve outcomes for pupils with different protected characteristics. It is a legal requirement, under the 2010 Act, which schools in Wales must follow. The effective and consistent delivery of our Strategic Equality Plan will enable our school to positively contribute to a fairer society by promoting equity, equality and positive relationships between all members of the school community irrespective of their protected characteristics. Furthermore, we will also aim to remove or minimise any disadvantage experienced by individuals due to their protected characteristics and ensure that appropriate steps are taken to overcome any barriers, particularly if participation in aspects of school life is disproportionately low. We will also aim to develop positive relations by tackling prejudice and discrimination, and by promoting understanding between individuals who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Section 7: Roles and Responsibilities

The following members of school staff will be responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the Strategic Equality Plan.

GOVERNING BODY

The governing body has set out its commitment to equality and diversity in our Education Strategic Plan and it will continue to do all it can to ensure that the school is fully inclusive of learners, 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 learners; and
- Ensures that no individual is discriminated against whilst in our school.

In order to meet its reporting responsibility, the governing body will report on the progress of the Strategic Equality Plan annually, as part of its Annual Report to Parents/Carers.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Senior Leaders in our school promote equality and eliminate discrimination by:

- Implementing the school's Strategic Equality Plan, 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 Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives;
- Ensuring that all appointment panels give due regard to the Strategic Equality 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 local authority and school policies; and
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the Strategic Equality Plan.

TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

The school regards equality as everyone's responsibility.

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 Strategic Equality Plan;
- 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 local authority and school's policies, e.g., reporting of racial incidents; and
- Supporting the work of support staff and encourage them to intervene in a positive way against any discriminatory incidents.

Section 8: Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders has been important in ensuring that we have a clear view of what actions are deemed important to tackle inequalities and discrimination in our school setting. Active engagement with stakeholders has also been an effective means of reviewing the impact of the current Strategic Equality Plan and for identifying any further areas for improvement.

Successful engagement requires information gathering and interaction with a range of different groups, whilst also remaining sensitive to the needs of individuals with different protected characteristics. Meaningfully securing the voices of learners, and their families and carers, is critical to understanding the needs of our pupils and families, particularly the most vulnerable.

An extensive range of different engagement activities have been undertaken to inform strategic plans. These include:

- An analysis of the survey responses or focus groups feedback on equality issues from a range of stakeholders including learners, parents/carers, staff, governors and the wider community. Some consideration was given to the analysing information according to protected characteristics to inform strategic planning;
- Learner voice activities and school council feedback;
- An analysis of school complaints;
- Feedback provided from parental consultation events and workshops;
- Feedback from annual review processes; and
- Outcomes from community cohesion events and activities.

When consulting, important consideration has been given to the most effective and reliable means of gathering information. Interpretation facilities have been put in place for those for whom English is an additional language or are newly arrived in this country. Modified materials have also been used to ensure accessibility for those with disabilities or ALN.

Section 9: Data Analysis and Evaluation

The school's self-evaluation and school improvement planning processes have also informed the Strategic Equality Plan. A comparison of the school's data, with local or national data (where available) has also been taken into consideration and includes:

- Pupil attainment and progress data relating to different vulnerable groups and protected characteristics;

- An analysis of curriculum access and choices according to vulnerable groups and protected characteristics;
- Attendance, exclusion and bullying/harassment data analysed according to vulnerable groups and protected characteristics where appropriate;
- Engagement levels in enrichment activities according to vulnerable groups or protected characteristics;
- Data on the recruitment, development and retention of employees; and an
- Evaluation of historical actions and outcomes in relation to equality.

Section 10: Equality Impact Assessments

Impact assessments have include the review of all current and proposed plans and policies in order to help us act to promote equality and to ensure that 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 the school's compliance with 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 Strategic Equality Plan itself.

Section 11: Staff Professional Learning

It is a statutory requirement to promote knowledge and understanding of the general duty amongst staff and to identify and address training needs in this area during the performance management process. This routinely undertaken on an annual basis and outcomes contribute to our professional learning plans in the school.

Section 12: Equality Objectives

Our Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives are set in light of stakeholder engagement, data analysis and self-evaluation (e.g., issues arising as a result of our analysis of our attainment data of boys v. girls; eFSM v non-eFSM, etc.).

Please see Appendix 1 for the details of the Strategic Equality Plan for 20023-2027 and the Equality Objectives for our school as informed by engagement activities, self-evaluation and local/national priorities. The Strategic Education Plan does cover all the relevant protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act (2010).

The actions detailed in Strategic Equality Plan are aligned with our School Improvement Plan and both plans are cross referenced so that they are inextricably linked.

The Strategic Equality Plan has clearly identified:

- Equality Objectives and specific actions;
- Expected impact and indicators of achievement (success criteria);
- Clear timescales;
- Lead responsibilities for identified actions;
- Resource implications; and
- Specified dates for impact assessment and review.

The Strategic Equality Plan will be routinely reviewed and annual reports provided to the governing body for parents/carers.

Section 13: Gender Pay Objective

The legislation requires that a gender pay objective is developed where a gender pay difference is identified, this will require statistical analysis of pay data and comparisons between male/female staff.

In our school, we have not been able to identify a pay difference as the staff group is too small to make statistical analysis appropriate.

Section 14: Publishing and Monitoring Results

The school annually provides a report detailing the Strategic Equality Plan and its evaluation of it to the governing body on an annual basis. The Plan and its evaluation will be shared with parents/carers.

All data collected has been used for the purpose of analysing trends by protected characteristic in performance, engagement and satisfaction with the support and provision offered by the school, whilst also being mindful of data protection requirements and legislation.

Please see Appendix 1 for further information on our Strategic Education Plan. This plan will be monitored by the governing body and all new plans will be submitted to the local authority.

Section 15: Strategic Leadership

The lead for the Strategic Equality Plan in Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community is Kate Olsen. Further information can also be provided by the Headteacher if required.

Appendix 1

Abertillery 3-16 Learning Community
STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN FOR 2023-2027

Date of Issue: Autumn 2023
First review of the Strategic Equality Plan: Autumn 2024
Formal review of Strategic Equality Plan: Summer 2027

Equality Objective 1 (please link to protected characteristics)					
Engagement Findings (e.g., priorities identified from stakeholder surveys, meetings, workshops etc.)					
Key Self-Evaluation Findings (e.g., priorities identified from qualitative and quantitative data)					
Further data required in future					
Success criteria					
Actions	Description	Resources	Lead Officer	Start Date	End Date
1.1					
1.2					
1.3					
1.4					
1.5					

Equality Objective 2 (please link to protected characteristics)					
Engagement Findings (e.g., priorities identifies from stakeholder surveys, meetings, workshops etc.)					
Key Self-Evaluation Findings (e.g., priorities identified from qualitative and quantitative data analysis)					
Further data required in future					
Success criteria					
Actions	Description	Resources	Lead Officer	Start Date	End Date
1.1					
1.2					
1.3					
1.4					
1.5					
