



# Argoed High School

## Strategic Equality Plan 2012 – 2016

**Strategic Equality Plan agreed by Governors:**

.....  
(Signed by Chair)

.....*Date*

**Scheme due for review:**

.....*(date)*

If you would like a copy of this document in an alternative format or your own language please contact

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# Strategic Equality Plan 2012 -2016

## 1. Introduction

1.1 We recognise our duty and responsibility to eliminate discrimination and promote equality for pupils, employees, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

We have developed our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) to ensure equality is at the heart of everything thing that we do as an education provider and as an employer. It is also a specific requirement of the public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Strategic Equality Plan sets out our priorities for equality for 2012 -20216 and the actions we will take to reduce identified inequalities, improve outcomes in education and employment and foster good community relations. The Plan will also help us to meet the general duty of the Equality Act (2010):-

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

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Our school and local community

The profile of our school and local community is set out in our Diversity and Equality policy which is included in Appendix 1. This also describes our commitment and approach to promoting equality in education and employment. All school Governors, employees and pupils have responsibility for promoting equality and adhering to the policy.

2.2 The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that the Diversity Equality Policy and Strategic Equality Plan are implemented and our objectives are achieved.

### 3. Our Equality Objectives

3.1 Our equality objectives are set out below:-

#### **Reduce Health inequalities**

**Action area 1.1:** Increase the number of children and young people in underrepresented groups attending extra-curricular and extension activities to develop physical activities and/or nutrition

#### **Reduce incidents that might impact on the ability of students to maximise their individual potential**

**Action area 1.2:** Reduce identity based bullying in schools (e.g. race, gender, religion, SEN and disability).

#### **Reduce unequal outcomes in education to maximise individual potential**

**Action area 2.1:** Reduce the gap in academic achievement between groups of students (e.g. boys and girls / FSM / EAL) at all key stages

**Action area 2.2:** Reduce the gap in well being between groups of students (e.g. boys and girls / FSM / EAL) at all key stages

#### **Reduce inequalities in representation and voice**

**Action area 3:** School Governing Bodies and pupil representatives on all school committees are representative of the local and school communities they serve.

Our objectives relate to all of the relevant protected characteristics and contribute to meeting the General and Specific Duties of the Equality Act (2010). The action plan (Appendix 2) sets out our objectives and describes:-

- the action we will take to meet the objectives
- how we will measure improvement
- who has responsibility for action
- time scales

The action plan is incorporated into the School Improvement Plan which ensures that it is monitored and evaluated systematically.

3.2 We developed our Equality Objectives through:

- Reviewing Flintshire County Council's and the Local Education Authority's (LEA) equality objectives;
- Engaging and consulting with stakeholders, for example, pupils, governors, parents;
- Reviewing national research and data, such as that provided by the Welsh Local Government Information;
- Considering the issues identified within inspection reports;
- Analysing pupil data, for example, attainment level of boys compared to attainment level of girls, take up of free school meals.

## 4. Engagement and Information gathering

### 4.1 Engagement

We regularly involve stakeholders, including children and young people, staff, parents/carers, governors, other users of the school and community representatives in relation to the development of policies and as required by the equalities duties. We use a wide range of mechanisms including:-

- Involving the School's Council – Executive Committee
- Circulating questionnaires in a variety of formats and languages to ensure the questionnaire is accessible and meets the communication needs of consultees, including disabled people, and people who do not speak English or Welsh;
- Holding meetings and focus groups ensuring the timing and venue is accessible and inclusive for stakeholders;
- Working with the Council's Parental Engagement Officer to engage with groups who are "seldom heard".

Specifically for this scheme, we involved:-

- ✓ The Local Consortium
- ✓ Governors
- ✓ Staff
- ✓ Pupils
- ✓ External partners – IWO, school nurse, educational psychologist

### 4.2 Information

Data and information is reviewed and analysed to measure our performance and identify areas for improvement; subsequent actions are included in the School's Improvement Plan. The information also contributes to equality impact assessments which are undertaken as part of the requirements of the equality duties. All data collected is used solely for the purpose of analysing trends by protected characteristic it is stored separately from personal information which identifies the individual and we ensure it meets the requirements of the Data Protection Act. To protect the identity of individuals published information contains data which has been aggregated. The Welsh Government and Local Education Authority collate and publish pupil data provided by schools. Flintshire County Council publish profile of the workforce.

The wide range of information gathered to identify equality objectives includes the following:

- profile of the local community;
- identification of children and young people, parents, carers, staff and other users of the school representing the different protected characteristics, if possible and appropriate;
- pupil attainment and progress data relating to different groups;
- school exclusions and expulsions by protected characteristic
- take up of free school meals
- incidents of identity based bullying and harassment

- reviewing hate incidents for Flintshire as recorded by Flintshire Community Safety Partnership
- research undertaken by Welsh Local Government Association
- 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;
- 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, partners in learning group

## **5. Equality Impact Assessment**

As required by legislation, we undertake equality impact assessments upon new and revised policies and plans to identify potential and actual inequalities and to promote equality and good community relations. This ensures we develop inclusive policies. Where possible we will work as a consortium with other schools to avoid duplication and consultation fatigue and use our resources efficiently. We follow guidance and templates provided by the LEA and use results of monitoring and engagement and consultation with stakeholders representing the protected characteristics to inform our impact assessments.

## **5. Monitoring and Review**

The Strategic Equality Plan will be monitored annually through the Governing body and as part of our School Improvement Plan. We will publish an annual report on our progress. This will be made available on our website and will be published as part of the Governors' Annual Report.

The Strategic Equality Plan will be reviewed and republished by April 2016 or earlier if, as a result of monitoring or new evidence, we need to alter any of our equality objectives or include new objectives.

## **6. Publication**

A copy of our Strategic Equality Plan will be published in English and Welsh on our website and in school. It will be made available in a range of formats on request. We will actively promote the Plan and include a summary within the School Prospectus.

# APPENDIX 1

## DIVERSITY and EQUALITY POLICY

Name of School. Argoed High School

<b>Description of School and its Community</b>
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A description of the school community that includes:

- **Ethnic and religious mix of school and its community;** 98% of the school population is white or white British -the remaining 2% come from other ethnic groups including Chinese, black European and white and black Caribbean.
- **Demographics of the catchment area;**  
The school draws pupils from a four main areas Argoed 1 and 2, New Brighton 1 and 2. These are classified as LSOA (lower super output areas). The total area is classed as an urban commuter area. Unemployment is 10%.
- **Gender balance;**  
The school learner population is 48.5% female and 51.5% male.
- **Racist, homophobic or hate crime incidents in the school and the local area;**  
The school has reported no incidents of racist or homophobic bullying in the past two years. The school follows LA guidelines on reporting such incidents.
- **Religions in the school;**  
47% of the school population are Christian, 4% Anglican, 2% other religions and 45% have none or no religion affiliation.
- **Languages spoken by pupils;**  
99% of learners are proficient in English and approximately 17% have some fluency in Welsh. Other languages spoken include Mandarin and Lithuanian.
- **Details of additional learning need within school and its community;**  
At any one time 17% of the learner population has recognised additional learning needs. 8.4% of pupils are statemented, 5.1% of pupils are on school action plus and 3.8% on school action.

## Description of Policy Formation and Consultation Process

Name of the School's Diversity and Equality Coordinator:

DAWN SPENCE (HEADTEACHER)

This policy has been developed and produced by a steering group consisting of the following individuals:

- Diversity and Equality Coordinator
- Assistant Head
- School Executive Committee (Year 11)
- Teacher /Governor
- IWO – Linda Ellis
- School nurse – Jacqui Lawrence
- Educational psychologist – Rona Hobson
- Local Consortium schools – R. Collett, R.Nicholson, I Walker, K.Downes, K.Bell, R.Jones and M.Biltcliffe

Before the policy statement was finalised the following groups in the schools and its community were consulted:

- ✓ School Council
- ✓ Senior Management Team
- ✓ Governors
- ✓ Teachers
- ✓ LA PSE Adviser

## Aims and Purpose of a Diversity and Equality Policy Statement

Argoed High School fully endorse the statement by the County Council

Flintshire County Council is committed to promoting fairness and equality through all its activities; through the Council's roles as service provider and commissioner, employer and community leader. The Council supports the following definition from the national Equalities Review in 2007: "An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish. An equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be."

The overarching aim of Flintshire's Diversity and Equality is policy is to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- Promote equality of opportunity; and
- Promote good relations between diverse communities

in the Council's delivery of services, goods, works and facilities, provision of grants, in engagement with partners and communities in the county and employment policies and practices.

The Policy applies specifically to discrimination, equality of opportunity and the promotion of good community relations in respect of the protected characteristics as identified in the Equality Act 2010:



- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race,
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

and to other personal characteristics and identity, including, for example social class, language, caring responsibilities or educational background.

At Argoed High School the aims of the Diversity and Equality policy statement are to:

- Ensure that an inclusive ethos is established and maintained;
- Ensure that the school is a place where everyone, irrespective of their age, disability, race, religion and belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, family background and/or language feels welcomed and valued;
- Ensure that all pupils and staff are encouraged to reach their full potential;
- Protect the human rights of all pupils and staff, parents, governors and visitors to the school;
- Prepare pupils for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of their living in a diverse society;
- Empower pupils to participate in their communities as active citizens who take responsibility for themselves and each other;
- Foster and encourage positive attitudes and behaviour towards all members of the diverse community.

### **Environment and Ethos of the School**

We, at Argoed High School, ensure that the aims listed above apply to the full range of our policies and practices including those that are concerned with:

#### ***For example***

- Equality projects and courses; teaching of the national curriculum, PSE and RE; strategies which use interactive and experiential approaches;
- Pupil's progress, attainment and assessment, behaviour, discipline and exclusions;
- Admissions and attendance;
- Encouragement of pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and the assessment of their development.
- Valuing pupils and promoting positive relationships and self-esteem;
- Staff selection, recruitment and induction;
- Effective coordination and staff training and support;
- Partnership with parents and the community;
- Opportunities in school for pupils to participate in decision making;
- Extra-curricular experiences, such as school councils, clubs etc;
- Physical environment of the school is conducive to health and well-being

### **Addressing sexism, racism, xenophobia and homophobia**

The school is opposed to all forms of discrimination based on person's age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, family background

and/or language. Any form of harassment and discriminatory language and behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Argoed High School. The school's anti-bullying policy and strategy clearly outlines the course of action in such circumstances.

## Responsibilities

The **Governing Body** is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy statement and related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for implementing this policy statement; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support, and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

**All staff** are expected to:

- incorporate principles of equality and diversity into all aspects of their work.
- deal with any discriminatory incidents that may occur;
- know how to identify and challenge stereotyping or discrimination;
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language;
- Provide reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, staff and members of the school community;

## Information and resources

The content of the policy will be known to all:

- staff;
- learners;
- parents, carers and guardians;
- governors;
- guest-speakers who come in to school;
- members of the community if they request it.

## Religious Observance

The community at Argoed High School will respect the religious beliefs and practices of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with all reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

## Action Plan

See appendix two.

## Monitoring, evaluation and review of this Policy

Argoed High School will collect, study and use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy and make adjustments as appropriate.

