



Maelor Church Schools Federation

Strategic Equality Plan 2024 – 2026

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| Date Approved By Governing Body | 24.6.25 |
| Review Date | 2026 |
| Equality Act Impact Assessment | Yes No Date |
| Signed (Chair of Governors) | <i>Clare Williams</i> |
| Signed (Headteacher) | <i>Emma Jones</i> |

Strategic Equality Plan agreed by Governors

Clare Williams (Chair of Governors): _____

Emma Jones (Headteacher): _____

Scheme due for review: September 2025

Background

The Equality Act 2010 brings together and replaces the previous anti-discriminatory laws, such as the Disability Discrimination, Race Relations and Equal Pay Acts with a single act. Further information can be found in the following Fact File produced by Governors Wales:

<http://www.governorswales.org.uk/publications/2011/09/20/03-11-equality-act-2010/>

Purpose of the Strategic Equality Plan

The Strategic Equality Plan has been developed so that the School can set out how it aims to meet its commitment to equality and how it will meet its legal obligations contained within the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

Public Sector Equality Duties

The General Duties

The Governors Guide to the Law (Autumn 2013) states that:

- Section 149 of the 2010 Act imposes a general duty on the governing body of a school to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the 2010 Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it ('Protected Characteristics' are explained in 2.4 below);
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the three aims of the general duty as part of the process of decision making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decision reached by governing bodies.

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Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take 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;
- Encourage 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.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the need of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice and to promote understanding.

The 2010 Act expressly states that this duty may involve treating some persons more favourably than others, but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited under the Act.

The Specific Duties

The Equality Act provides a power to make regulations imposing duties on public bodies to support better performance of the general duty; these are known as the Specific Public Sector Equality Duties and are different in England, Scotland and Wales.

The Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 (S. I. 2011/1064) ("the 2011 Regulations") imposes specific duties on governing bodies to enable better performance of the general duty.

The 2011 Regulations place the following requirements upon governing bodies:

- To publish its "equality objectives" no later than 2 April 2012. The objectives must be designed to enable the governing body to better perform the general duty. If an equality objective is not published in respect

of one or more of the protected characteristics, the governing body must publish its decision not to do so. The governing body must review its equality objectives within four years of their initial publication and at least once every four years subsequently. The equality objectives may be revised or remade by the governing body at any time. If the governing body revises an objective without remaking it, then the revision must be published as soon as possible;

- To publish a statement which sets out the steps it has taken or intends to take in order to achieve each equality objective and the anticipated timescales involved. If an equality objective is revised or remade by the governing body, it must either amend the statement or publish a new one;
- To make appropriate arrangements to monitor its progress in order to fulfil each objective and to monitor the effectiveness of the steps it has taken to fulfil each objective;
- To give due regard to relevant information that it holds when considering and designing its equality objectives;
- To seek the involvement of those persons that it considers represents the interests of persons who share one or more protected characteristics and who have an interest in the way the governing body carries out its functions. The requirement applies to the following activities:

- o Considering and designing equality objectives;
- o Carrying out an assessment of whether there are things or that could be done that contribute or would be likely to contribute to a governing body's compliance with the general duty;
- o Carrying out an assessment of the likely impact of the proposed policies and practices, of policies or practices that it has decided to review and any proposed revisions to those policies and practices on compliance with the general duty; and
- o Publishing or reviewing a Strategic Equality Plan);

- The governing body may also involve or consult such other persons as it considers appropriate.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that any documents or information that the governing body is required to publish are accessible by persons who share one or more of the protected characteristics. This means that a governing body must take into account all of a person's protected characteristics, and if there are a range of steps that it would be reasonable for the governing body to take to make the documents or information accessible then it must take all of those steps;
- To make appropriate arrangements to ensure that it identifies the relevant information that it holds and identifies and subsequently collects the relevant information that it does not hold;

- To carry out an assessment in order to identify relevant information which identifies whether there are things being done by the governing body that contribute to its compliance (or otherwise) with the general duty and things that could be done to contribute to its compliance. In carrying out such an assessment, the governing body must have due regard to any relevant information that it has already identified, or collected and holds. The governing body should look for evidence (relevant information) both internally and externally which may be used, for example, in equality impact assessments;
- To make arrangements in order to assess the likely impact of proposed policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty, as well as the impact of any policy or practice that it has decided to review or any proposed revision to a policy or practice. There must be arrangements in place for the publication of reports regarding these assessments where they demonstrate that there is likely to be a substantial impact on an authority's ability to comply with the general duty. Also, the governing body must monitor the impact of its policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty;
- In each year, to collect specified employment information related to the school's employees and publish that information. This information may be set out in the governing body's annual report;
- To make such arrangements as it considers appropriate for promoting amongst the school's employees knowledge and understanding of the general duties and the additional duties which flow from it;
- When considering what its equality objectives should be, the governing body must have due regard to the needs in respect of the school's employees to have equality objectives which address the causes of any pay differences. Those pay differences are between those that do share a protected characteristic and those that do not;
- To publish an action plan which sets out any policy it has relating to the need to address the causes of any gender pay difference and any gender pay equality objective that has been published by the governing body;
- To make a Strategic Action Plan ("SEP") no later than 2 April 2012. The SEP is intended to be a central vehicle for the various matters required by the 2011 Regulations so that there can be a single point of access for the public. The SEP must contain a statement setting out a description of the governing body, its equality objectives, details of the steps it has taken or intends to take in order to fulfil those objectives, the timescale for the fulfilment of the objectives, and details of arrangements it has made or intends to make to comply with the 2011 Regulations. The SEP can be revised or remade at any time, though it must be published as soon as possible after it has

been made or remade. If the SEP has been revised but not remade, the governing body must publish its revisions. The SEP itself may form part of another published document. The governing body is under an obligation to keep its SEP under review;

- To publish a report in respect of each reporting period (1 April to 31 March except for the period ending 31 March 2012, when the reporting period will commence on 6 April 2011). The report must not be published later than 31 March in the reporting period in question. This report may form part of another published document.

Who has to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duties?

The Equality Act imposes obligations on everyone concerned with the provision of services to the public, however the Public Sector Equality Duty only applies to organisations that have been identified as 'public authorities' under the act this includes Schools, local Councils, Fire and Rescue Authorities and the National Parks in Wales.

Who is protected under the Public Sector Equality Duties?

Everyone is protected under the Equality Act however the general and specific public sector equality duties refer to people who have particular 'protected characteristics'. This is the term used in the Equality Act to identify the types of things that affect how people are treated and can mean people may experience discrimination. The law is designed to protect them. There are nine protected characteristics, they are:

1. age
2. disability
3. gender reassignment
4. marriage and civil partnership
5. pregnancy and maternity
6. sexual orientation
7. race
8. religion or belief
9. sex

School Context

Context of the School

Borderbrook Anglican Voluntary Controlled School is an English medium primary school with integrated nursery provision, serving a rural area close to the English border. Our catchment is varied, covering a range of housing from privately owned housing to council owned/rented properties. The school is organised into two vertically integrated classes, Foundation Phase and Key stage Two. There are 11 full time pupils and 1 part time pupils on roll. Whole school pupil numbers (of statutory school

age) have fluctuated during the last 4 years. The school offers before and after school care, also pre-school education with wrap-around.

There are no families with Welsh as their first language. All our pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. As an Anglican V.C. School, the majority of our pupils follow and/or practice Christian Beliefs. Currently there are no pupils with EAL. 36% of pupils are on the ALN Register. This is well above the national average. Currently 27.3% of families take their entitlement for Free School Meals.

Context of the School

St. Paul's CIW Voluntary Aided Primary School is an English medium primary school with integrated nursery provision, serving a rural area close to the English border. Our catchment is varied, covering a range of housing from privately owned housing to council owned/rented properties. The school is organised into two vertically integrated classes, Foundation Phase and Key stage Two. There are 28 full time pupils and 4 part time pupils on roll. The school has a stable population. The school offers before and after school care, also pre-school education.

Most of our pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. Currently there are 9% with EAL. There are no families with Welsh as their first language. As a Church in Wales V.A. School, the majority of our pupils follow and/or practice Christian Beliefs. 19% of pupils are on the ALN Register. 12.5% of families take their entitlement for Free School Meals.

We comply with the Local Authority Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures which now monitors the appointment of all staff. All of these people, their faiths, cultures, communities and languages the school values equally.

Aims

We recognise and celebrate the fact that our society is made up of people from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. It is important that all children are prepared to live in such a society. 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. Through the equality improvement actions and strategically planned tasks detailed in this document, we aim to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

We have based our Strategic Equality Objectives on local, regional and national priorities within Education as well as feedback from engagement with our school community and our own school data.

Equalities Summary Statement

At The Maelor Church Schools Federation we aim to provide a happy, caring environment in which all pupils can feel confident and able to learn. We seek to foster an environment of mutual respect and support between all staff, children, parents/carers and carers and the wider community.

Our school is committed to eliminating any unlawful discrimination on grounds of age, race, gender, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or gender assignment by creating an environment where every individual, regardless of ability or background, is able to participate and is valued fully as a member of the school community. Being opposed to all forms of discrimination and prejudice we promote a positive attitude towards differences and expect respect for people of all backgrounds.

Any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic, disablist or potentially damaging to any group will not be tolerated and will be challenged and monitored. Information derived from monitoring will be used to plan whole-school strategies to combat incidents. Information on identity based incidents and bullying will be shared regularly with the Local Authority to help actions to combat hate crime across the County Borough.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body and management of the school will work with all its partners to be proactive in promoting equal opportunities, fostering good relations and in tackling unlawful discrimination. They will encourage support and enable all children and staff from all protected characteristics to reach the highest standards possible as indicated in the school's vision statement and this Equal Opportunities Policy.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with Equalities Act (2010) and fulfils its legal responsibilities. With assistance from the Headteacher, the Governing Body will ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Making sure the Equality Policy is readily available, along with related policies, eg "Anti-Bullying Policy" and that governors, staff, children, parents/carers and guardians know about it.
- Making sure the policy and its procedures are followed.

- Producing regular information for staff and governors about how the policy is working, and providing training for them on the policy if necessary.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.
- Making sure the Equality Policy is regularly monitored and reviewed.

The named person with responsibility for dealing with reported incidents of unlawful discrimination is the Headteacher..

Staff and pupils are aware of who the named person is. The named person ensures that all reported incidents are recorded and sent to the Local Authority as requested.

The Equal Opportunities Link Governors are Mrs Claire Williams (Chair of the Governing Body) and Mr Steve Swinden (Vice Chair of the Governing Body).

The Equal Opportunities Link Governors ensure that the school regularly reviews and evaluates all policies and practices in relation to Equal Opportunities, leading to the setting of targets which address aspects of inequality or disadvantage in all of the school's activities.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of unlawful discrimination and bullying
- Being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and good relations between all groups
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination, and taking up training opportunities
- Striving to provide images and lesson plans that show positive images of and are inclusive of people from the protected characteristics

Information Gathering and Engagement

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 assessments 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. The reason that this progress is important is to understand the full range of needs of the school community.

Publication and Reporting

The school Strategic Equality Plan is available in large print and other formats on request. We will review the progress made on the action plans and the impact of the Plan itself on school ethos and practice within the school.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team and Governing Body and adopted by the Governing Body as per the schedule on the front page. (Action Plan annually and policy three yearly).

We will use Equality 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. Based on the above, we will review the Plan, not less than annually with a full review not less than four yearly.

Strategic Equality Plan 2024/25-2025/26

Appendices

Strategic Equality Objectives for Wrexham: <https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/service/strategic-equality-plan>

Strategic Equality Plan for Wrexham: <https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Strategic-Equality-Plan-2020-24.pdf>

App. 1 School Equality Objectives and Action Plan

| North Wales Objective: Reduce attainment gaps in education between protected groups to achieve their potential. | | | |
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| School Priority: To support our pupils to achieve their potential. | | | |
| What we will do to contribute to this objective in our school | Who will lead on this action for our school | How will we measure this in our school | When we will complete this action |
| Review our monitoring arrangements to cover all relevant protected characteristics. Understand any connections between educational attainment, barriers and protected characteristics, create an action plan in response. | Headteacher | Review, complete and action plan in place. | On-going |
| Analyse educational attainment profiles by protected characteristic. | Headteacher | Data will support target setting. Inequalities between protected groups will be reduced. | On-going |

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| Take into account of cultural differences, caring responsibilities and other diversity issues when designing individual programmes, one-page profiles will be used to identify what is important to the pupil and how they can be supported. | Headteacher | All pupils identify strengths; what to improve and how they can be supported. Parental input to these plans. | September 2020 - ongoing |
| Continue to consider diversity when creating IDP's, Challenge Plans and reviewing curriculum planning. | Headteacher and Teaching Staff | Ensure diversity is considered when planning for individuals, groups and classes. | On-going |
| Implement changes to pedagogy and curriculum planning for new curriculum. Analyse impact against protected characteristics. | Headteacher and Teaching Staff | Maximum engagement in learning for all pupils. Inequalities are reduced. | July 2022 |

| North Wales Objective 2: Promote and celebrate the ethnic diversity of our communities ensuring they are inclusive and welcoming. | | | |
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| School Priority: To ensure our school is accessible, inclusive and welcoming to pupils, parents / guardians, staff and visitors. | | | |
| What we will do to contribute to this objective in our school | Who will lead on this action for our school | How will we measure this in our school | When we will complete this action |
| Audit of disabled pupils in school to identify any factors which affect participation/accessibility. | Headteacher | Review, complete and action plan any needs accordingly. | July (annually) |
| Audit of disabled staff and recruitment procedures. | Headteacher | Review, complete and action plan any needs accordingly. | July (annually) |
| Audit of users to ensure site is accessible to all. | Headteacher | Review, complete and action plan any needs accordingly. | July (annually) |
| Continue to improve awareness of disability through the curriculum, assemblies and role models. | Headteacher and Teaching Staff | Ensure diversity is considered when planning for individuals, groups and classes. | On-going |
| Continue to improve awareness of ethnic diversity in our communities through the | Headteacher and Teaching Staff | Ensure diversity is considered when planning for individuals, groups and classes. | On-going |

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| curriculum, assemblies and role models. | | | |
| Continue to ensure all policies and procedures are properly assessed against the protective characteristics to meet the needs of the federation community. | Headteacher and Governing body working party | All policies will meet the requirements of Equality Act 2010. | July 2022 - Ongoing |