

# EQUALITY, DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY POLICY



Mae pob polisi yn cael ei adolygu'n flynyddol mewn Is-Bwyllgor Llywodraethwyr, a wedyn yn cael ei dderbyn gan y Bwrdd Llywodraethol Llawn. Mae Clerc y Llywodraethwyr sef Mrs D de Schoolmeester yn cadw cofnod o'r dyddiadau adolygu.

Every policy is reviewed annually in a Governors' Sub-Committee meeting and then ratified in the Full Governing Body meeting. The Clerk to the Governors, Mrs D de Schoolmeester keeps a record of all reviewing processes and dates.

# **YSGOL DYFFRYN AMAN**

## **DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY / ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1. Purpose of this Policy and Accessibility Plan**

At Ysgol Dyffryn Aman we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all.

We aim to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel confident about disclosing their disabilities in the knowledge that they will receive a positive and supportive response which facilitates their full participation in the range of activities offered by the school.

At Ysgol Dyffryn Aman we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn in, work in and visit our school.

#### **2. The Disability Equality Duty (DED)**

##### **Background Information**

##### **Definition of Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act of 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to day activities'.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 extended the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 to cover education. Since September 2002 the school's Governing Body has had three key duties towards disabled pupils under Part 4 of the DDA, which are:

- i. Not to treat disabled pupils less favourably for a reason related to their disability
- ii. To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils to ensure that they are not at a substantial disadvantage, and
- iii. To plan to increase access to the physical environment, the curriculum and written information (documented in an Accessibility Plan).

The Disability Discrimination Act of 2005 has extended the definition of disability to include people with a hearing or visual impairment, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, mental health issues and incontinence. People with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autistic spectrum disorder, Down's Syndrome and hydrocephalus are included. Medical conditions such as cystic fibrosis, severe

asthma, diabetes, cancer, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, sickle cell anaemia and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) are deemed disabilities. Facial disfigurement, severe dyslexia, gross obesity and diagnosed eating disorders are all included. If a person has been disabled in the past (for example, those who have recovered from cancer, or people with a history of mental illness), then they are still covered by the legislation for the rest of their life.

### **3. The Duty**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 2005 places a general duty on schools, requiring them to have due regard to the following when carrying out their functions as employers, as providers of education and associated services and as providers of services to the wider community:

- Promoting equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- Eliminating discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA;
- Eliminating harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disability;
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- Encouraging participation in public life by disabled persons;
- Taking steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than their non-disabled peers.

This general duty is also known as the Disability Equality Duty (DED). A specific duty under the 2005 legislation requires all schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme and an associated action plan covering a three year cycle.

### **4. Unlawful Discrimination**

Ysgol Dyffryn Aman will ensure that discrimination is avoided in:

- The selection, appointment and promotion arrangements for staff;
- Staff conditions of service;
- Staff training;
- The arrangements for determining student admission;
- The terms on which admission is offered;
- Refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an admission application;
- Provision of education or associated services (including educational visits, extra-curricular activities and youth service activities);
- Exclusions.

### **5. Pupils**

Ysgol Dyffryn Aman fully supports the vision of Carmarthenshire Children's Services, namely:

- We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future;
- Inclusion is the process of taking necessary steps to ensure that every young person is given equality of opportunity to develop socially, to learn and to enjoy community life.

Every effort will be made to ensure that 'reasonable adjustments' are made to accommodate disabled pupils and young people, while bearing in mind the interests of other pupils and young people. The school is required to make under the terms of SENDA 2001:

- Improvements in access to the curriculum for disabled pupils and young people;
- Physical improvements to increase access to education and associated services (e.g. extra-curricular activities); and
- Improvements in the provision of information in a range of formats for disabled pupils and young people;
- There is an additional requirement for schools to explore whether or not pupils with behavioural issue may or may not have an underlying disability leading to this. For example, the following can be underlying reasons for poor behaviour; mental illness, mental health problems, learning difficulties, dyslexia, diabetes, epilepsy;
- The school will take into account all these requirements when considering the inclusion and treatment of disabled pupils in the school.

*(N.B. Behaviour difficulties arising from social or domestic circumstances are not covered by the Act.)*

## **6. Pupils – Education and Associated Services**

The school will examine each individual case to determine the best adjustments that can be made to accommodate every individual's needs.

The school aims to fulfil the requirements of the legislation to make 'reasonable adjustments' for pupils and young people with disabilities, to enable them to have access as far as is reasonably practicable to the school premises, facilities, curriculum and associated services.

All relevant information is recorded on the individual's school record (staff or student).

A review will be held at least annually as part of the annual Performance Management programme in the case of staff, or as part of the whole school review process and the annual special needs review in the case of pupils.

Risk assessments will be carried out on behalf of disabled staff, pupils and visitors on an annual basis, and as circumstances change.

These risk assessments will be the responsibility of:

- The line manager in the case of a new member of staff;
- The Head of Year with the Additional Needs Co-ordinator (ALENCO) or delegated staff member as appropriate for pupils;
- The member of staff that the visitor has come to see or whom they will be working with.

Safeguarding pupils with Disabilities:

- Safeguarding disabled children's welfare is everybody's responsibility, and given that we know that disabled children are more vulnerable to abuse than non-disabled children, awareness amongst professionals about safeguarding disabled children is essential.
- Any concerns must be shared with the ALNCO and Headteacher.

## **7. Action on Transfer into the School**

At transfer to Ysgol Dyffryn Aman, additional liaison time is allocated for disabled pupils and their families to ensure that the student's educational needs and the school's requirements are fully understood by staff at the feeder school, parents/carers and student, and to ensure that there is a smooth transition.

## **8. Achievements of Disabled Pupils**

Records are kept of all pupils' achievements including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a disability. Any individual feedback from pupils, parents or carers regarding specific actions are recorded on the student's file. Achievements of all pupils are valued at Ysgol Dyffryn Aman whether they are of an academic, social value etc.

## **9. Educational opportunities available to Disabled Pupils**

- Alternative provision to access all areas of curriculum teaching will be put in place if a student is physically unable to go to class;
- We will endeavour to ensure that all pupils have equal access to educational visits/trips;
- All pupils have the right to attend all trips and residential visits. This will be achieved through careful consultation with parents/carers, planning, funding and adequate manning of visits;
- In all teaching and learning activities, a full range of teaching and learning styles will be employed to ensure that no student is excluded from learning;
- Additional careers guidance will be offered in order that the disabled student has the same opportunity to access careers advice;
- We will also refer to specialist Children Services Careers advisors where the student has additional needs;
- Access arrangements will allow equal access to examinations, so that pupils can fulfil their potential;

- Pupils will be entered for the level of examination which is appropriate for their level of ability.

## **10. Sensory Support for Pupils**

- The school will make provision to enable pupils with sensory support needs to access the full curriculum, for instance, by providing documents in alternative formats, and by considering classroom seating and accommodation arrangements;
- Children's Services Sensory Support visits the school to provide advice and assistance in cases where sensory support is needed.

## **11. Parents with Disabilities**

- The school will meet the needs of parents and carers with disabilities wherever possible, for instance by providing documentation in alternative formats if requested;
- Parents' Evenings will be held in the Main Hall at Ysgol Dyffryn Aman. Parents can request an adjacent room (401) to learn of their child's progress in an environment with less background noise.

## **12. Involvement of people with additional needs in developing the policy**

As we look to develop the Disability Equality Policy, we will continue to consult with:

- The parents/carers of disabled pupils who would like to come to Ysgol Dyffryn Aman, to identify particular needs and to ensure that, where possible, these are met;
- The pupils themselves to ensure that all of their needs are being met;
- Carmarthenshire County Council in order to ensure that as facilities are developed, they meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act;
- The Health and Safety Executive in order to ensure that any modification of the buildings does not contravene legislation to protect any pupils, staff, or visitors to the school.

We will continue to use these mechanisms for consultation in the future, but will also seek to widen the spectrum of those consulted, specifically:

- Through encouraging disabled pupils to have representation on the School Council;
- Through setting up a focus group to collect and collate the views of disabled members of our community.

## **13. Information Gathering**

As a result of our consultations we have made some significant improvements to our school environment (see the School Improvement and Development Plan).

We regard the following as examples of the strengths of the school in promoting equality for individuals with additional needs:

- Academic mentoring;
- Timetabling of pupils to accessible classrooms where required;
- Sensitivity with which school address the issue;
- Provision of lifts.

Consultations with Governors, staff, pupils, parents and carers have informed our Accessibility Plan, which follows this policy document.

## **14. Recruitment, Development and Retention of Disabled Employees**

### **i. Recruitment of Staff**

The school follows Carmarthenshire County Council procedures in the recruitment of teaching and support staff to ensure equality of opportunity.

The application form used specifically requests disclosure of disability, information which is then recorded within school on appointment. This is used to inform suitable provision for the successful applicant.

### **ii. Development of staff**

The school will analyse the information in respect of disabled staff:

- In teaching, teaching support, administrative support and site support roles;
- At all levels of seniority in the school;
- As permanent or temporary members of staff, full-time or part-time or casual staff;
- In training and professional development opportunities;
- In disciplinary and capability procedures;
- In harassment and bullying procedures;
- As contract staff, for example: contract cleaners and agency supply teachers;
- Among those who take sick leave;
- Among those leaving the profession.

The development needs of disabled staff will be discussed with the member of staff on a request; often these discussions occur on an informal basis, but these can be formalised on request.

Wherever possible, the timetable will be adjusted to reflect the needs of disabled members of staff. Other appropriate adjustments may be made as agreed between the member of staff, their Line Manager and the Leadership Team.

The school values the wellbeing of all members of staff. Ysgol Dyffryn Aman signed up with Carmarthenshire County Council Human Resources and, where a member of staff is disabled or has additional needs, accesses Occupational Health services at an early stage. The school actively supports and contributes to any Access to Work resources that are recommended as a result of a referral to Occupational Health.

The annual revision of the Disability Equality Scheme will involve an analysis of whether appropriate adjustments are being made for staff with disabilities. Support provided to enable disabled staff to return to work or continue in service will also be analysed at annual review.

### **iii. Retention of Staff**

Each member of staff leaving school will be invited to complete an exit survey evaluating the extent to which the school has met their needs and whether it is a disabled friendly place to work which encourages diversity in its workplace.

We will continue to collate data and evidence and to liaise with the local Authority around the collection of information to ensure that policies and practices meet the legal responsibilities of the Disability Equality Duty.

## **15. School Environment**

We are continuing to make reasonable adjustments to make our site as accessible as possible, whilst recognising that there is a variety of buildings from several different periods which together comprise the fabric of the school. Following consultation the Accessibility Plan has been drawn up to drive ongoing improvement (see below).

## **16. School Facility Lettings**

Ysgol Dyffryn Aman makes facilities and resources available on a lettings basis to all members of the community. There is a managed system of hiring facilities and only buildings with 100% DDA access are available to hirers. The responsibility for allocating groups to suitable spaces lies with the Lettings Officer.

## **17. Contractors and Procurement**

Contractors and procurements from Carmarthenshire County Council approved lists are covered by the County Council's Disability Equality Scheme.



## **18. Discrimination in Admissions**

The Governing Body ensures that disabled pupils, young people and adult pupils are not discriminated against:

- Through the criteria determined for admission to the school, or
- By refusing an application from a disabled person for admission to the school, based on their disability.

## **19. Off-site Activities**

Ysgol Dyffryn Aman will ensure as far as reasonably practicable that pupils, young people and staff with disabilities are given access to off-site activities organised by the school. This responsibility lies with the officer responsible for Educational Visits (the Assistant Headteacher).

## **20. Eliminating Harassment and Bullying**

Ysgol Dyffryn Aman strives to achieve a positive, encouraging atmosphere conducive to nurturing positive attitudes towards all people with disability of any sort.

Should incidents of bullying/harassment occur, they will be dealt with in line with the sanctions set out in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Details of bullying incidents involving disabled pupils are deemed to be serious. Bullying incidents are recorded and categorised as being racist, sexist, homophobic or based on a student's additional needs.

The Governing Body will take positive action against any employees, pupils or other person (visitors/volunteers) who are involved in the harassment of another employee, student or other person. All members of the school community i.e. employees, pupils or others have a duty not to harass others on the ground of their disability (or any other grounds recognized by the law) and to report instances of harassment to the Headteacher (or in the case of harassment by the Headteacher, to the Chair of the Governing Body).

## **21. Membership of the Governing Body**

All nominations received to become a member of the Governing Body of Ysgol Dyffryn Aman are treated equally. Disabled representatives are welcome and proceedings are made accessible. Parent Governors are available to parents and their contact details may be obtained from the Clerk to the governors.

## **22. Liaison with Parents**

The governors will make available to parents/carers information relating to:

- The Accessibility Plan;

- How the school helps pupils with disability gain access to the curriculum; what the school does to ensure fair treatment for disabled pupils.

Ysgol Dyffryn Aman will continue to ensure close liaison with families of all pupils with disability through the provision of designated staff (e.g. ALENCO, appropriate Learning Support Assistants, Assistant Headteachers, Heads of Year and Form Tutors).

Wherever possible, information for home will be provided in different formats if requested.

## **23. Training**

Appropriate training for staff, pupils and young people to further understanding and implementation of the DDA and SENDA will be provided. The ALENCO and County Disability Co-ordinator are responsible for organising whole school training on DDA and SENDA issues.

Staff working with pupils with individual needs will have access to suitable and relevant training as necessary.

Staff will be given, as relevant, advice from external agencies regarding the learning needs of individual pupils (for example, the Sensory Support Service).

## **24. Responsibilities**

### **i. Governing Body Responsibilities**

The Governing Body ensuring that disabled people are not treated less favourably in the following aspects as relevant:

- Accessibility to the premises and facilities;
- Accessibility to the curriculum;
- Accessibility of associated educational services;
- Training of staff and the education of pupils.

The Governing Body will:

- Oversee the implementation of all the school's policies and practices including the area of Disability, Equality and Inclusion;
- Review what reasonable adjustments are being made and could be made;
- Consider the school's Accessibility Plan; and
- Review the Plan annually.

The Governing Body is also responsible for the appointment of a SEN link governor. The link governor covers SEN provision and has additional responsibilities in overseeing the implementation, review and monitoring and future development of this policy and Accessibility Plan.

## **ii. Headteacher Responsibilities**

The Headteacher will:

- Along with the Governing Body, ensure the implementation of the Scheme;
- Report progress as required to the Governing Body;
- Ensure that the Accessibility Plan has been reviewed periodically and updated annually, or as necessary and report progress to the governing body;
- Ensure that regular liaison with parents/carers of pupils with additional needs takes place.

## **iii. Leadership Team Responsibilities** comprise

- The positive promotion and implementation of the policy;
- Specific staff with responsibility for various aspects of the policy (see Accessibility Plan for details);
- The member of staff with responsibility for staff training and staff induction.

## **iv. ALENCO Responsibilities**

- To provide access to regular relevant training opportunities and updates;
- To include DDA issues in the induction programme;
- Undertake SEN annual reviews and reporting, in addition to on-going and regular monitoring.

## **v. Staff with responsibilities (e.g. Heads of Department/Year)**

- Implementation of the policy/scheme and reporting, recording as appropriate;
- Staff development within their area.

## **vi. Teaching and Support Staff Responsibilities**

- Familiarity with the policy/scheme and assist in its implementation;
- Undertake training as relevant.

## **vii. Expectations of Pupils**

- To treat disabled people as favourably as others and to apply the school code of conduct at all times.

# **25. Accessibility Plan**

Our Accessibility Plan follows the local authority's guidelines and aims to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils and young people can participate in the school curriculum;

- Improve the physical environment of the school in order to enable disabled pupils and young people to take advantage of education and associated services;
- Enable disabled staff to have reasonable access to premises and facilities that they need for their contracted duties;
- Ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, the needs of disabled visitors to the site are taken into account.

Action already taken includes:

- Provision of lift access in buildings;
- Changes to timetable to ensure accessibility;
- Provision of resources in enlarged print;
- Availability of Disability Awareness training to all staff on a regular basis.

## **26. Responsible Persons**

- **Headteacher : Mr J Durbridge**
- **Assistant Headteacher: Mr D. Campbell (Buildings)**
- **Designated Member of Staff (ALENCO): Mrs C Griffiths**
- **Governor for Child Protection/Safeguarding: Mrs P Howells and Mrs S O'Neil.**
- **Additional Learning Needs Link Governor: Mrs S O'Neil**

## **27. Reviewing/Monitoring**

The action plan will be reviewed and monitored by the School Leadership Team and Governors annually.

This Disability Equality policy will be reviewed and published on the school's website each year and will be revised every three years.

### **Checklist for school Leadership Team and Governors**

- Is information collected on disability with regards to both pupils and staff? Is this information used to improve the provision of services?
- Is student achievement monitored by disability? Are there trends or patterns in data that require additional action?
- Are disabled pupils encouraged to participate in school life?
- Is bullying and harassment of disabled pupils and staff monitored and is this information used to make a difference?
- Is the school environment as accessible as possible to pupils, staff and visitors to the school? Are Parents' Evenings and other events which parent or carers attend held in an accessible part of the school?
- Is information available to parents, visitors, pupils and staff in formats which are accessible if required?

- Are procedures for the election of parent governors open to candidates and voters who are disabled?