

# North Wales Public Sector Equality Network



## Top Ten Tips for Advancing Equality in Schools



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
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University Health Board



Owmni Adsefydlu Cymunedol  
Cymru  
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Community Rehabilitation Company



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### Top Ten Tips for Advancing Equality in Schools

1. Appoint a School Governor Equality Champion.
2. Maintain an up to date Strategic Equality Plan, Disability Access Plan, Equality Policy and Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy.
3. Communicate to the whole school community your commitment to advancing equality, challenging discrimination and combating identity based bullying and harassment.
4. Use public notice boards to display your commitment to equality, tackling unfairness and discrimination and the availability of communication support and accessible formats.
5. Ensure all staff and Governors receive equality and diversity training (as relevant to their role) within the new starter induction and as part of their ongoing personal development of teaching and non-teaching staff.
6. Use appraisal or supervision meetings to raise equality and diversity issues, identify staff training needs and areas for improvement in the school.
7. Develop a programme for reviewing and equality impact assessing policies and procedures.
8. Engage and consult a wide range of people in reviewing and developing new policies and procedures.
9. Put in place equality monitoring arrangements that cover job applicants, employees, Governors and volunteers
10. Ensure progress on delivering the schools Strategic Equality Plan and equality outcomes for the school community are included in the Governing Body Annual Report to Parents.

## More Details

1. Appoint a School Governor Equality Champion. This demonstrates a sound commitment to equality at the highest level of your school community. This person should have a personal commitment to fairness and be willing to undertake equality and diversity training – this may include e-learning, workbooks or training courses. Taking on this role does not mean that this person assumes sole responsibility for ensuring the school meets the legal requirements. They will work with the Head Teacher and the school management team to help mainstream equality into all school policies and procedures. Having an Governor Equality Champion ensures that the school governing body has at least one person that has a good understanding of equality, diversity and the legal requirements placed upon the school. This person will play an important role in helping the school governing body integrate equality and diversity across decisions and ensure that the school is taking steps to meet the equality duties.
2. Maintain an up to date Strategic Equality Plan, Disability Access Plan, Equality Policy and Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy. Schools are under a legal requirement to publish a Strategic Equality Plan; this could also include the equality policy statement - it is good practice to include the Disability Access Plan as an appendix. Refer to the WLGA Guidance for further information. Schools should also have in place arrangements for tackling bullying and harassment of any type and this should include identity based bullying and harassment for example on grounds of disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation.
3. Communicate to the whole school community your commitment to advancing equality, challenging discrimination and combating identity based bullying and harassment. It is important to communicate to the whole school community a clear commitment to maintaining a safe and welcoming school environment for pupils, parents and guardians, staff and visitors to your school. A school should have clear plans in place to communicate its commitment.
4. Use public notice boards to display your commitment to equality, tackling unfairness and discrimination and the availability of communication support and accessible formats. This should include details of the schools Strategic Equality Plan, Equality Policy, Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy, and arrangements for providing information in accessible formats and other ways of ensuring everyone can access the school environment and communicate effectively.
5. Ensure all staff and Governors receive equality and diversity training (as relevant to their role) within the new starter induction and as part of their ongoing personal development of teaching and non-teaching staff. A school should put in place an equality and diversity training plan and ensure that equality is part of the new-starter induction. Many local authorities already have in place training materials that can be used or adapted.

6. Use appraisal or supervision meetings to raise equality and diversity issues, identify staff training needs and areas for improvement in the school. As part of maintaining its equality policies and procedures a school should use of appraisals or supervision meetings to ask staff if they have any issues or suggestions that would help advance equality across any aspect of the school or its wider community. A school may wish to include two or three standard questions or points that can be discussed within the appraisal or supervision meeting.
7. Develop a programme for reviewing and equality impact assessing policies and procedures. Schools are under a legal requirement to assess the impact of policies, procedures and decisions on different groups protected by the Equality Act 2010. Schools are also required to publish the results of their assessments. A school should make a list of all of its policies across all of its functions including employment. This should include those it has developed for its own use and those it has adopted from the local authority. It is likely that those policies and procedures that have been adopted from the local authority have already been subject to equality impact assessment – a school should check that this is the case and obtain a copy for their files. Policies and procedures developed by the school should be included in the review schedule. All policies and procedures will need to be checked for their relevance to the equality duties and a review schedule created setting out which policies will be reviewed and assessed for their impact on the full range of relevant protected groups. Many local authorities have in place equality impact assessment toolkits that can be used and adapted.
8. Engage and consult a wide range of people in reviewing and developing new policies and procedures. Schools are under a duty to engage and consult people from protected groups when developing and accessing new or revised policies and procedures. A school should take steps to encourage a wide range of people from across the school community to share their views and experiences and use this feedback when deciding its policies and procedures.
9. Put in place equality monitoring arrangements that cover job applicants, employees, Governors and volunteers. Schools are under a legal duty to carry out equality monitoring. Local authority job application packs include equality monitoring forms; however, where schools recruit and select their own staff, they are required to encourage applicants to provide equality monitoring information and for producing an analysis of the data provided. Many school governing bodies are very diverse and others may not represent the diversity of the wider school community or the catchment area. Carrying out confidential equality monitoring of job applicants, employees, volunteers and the make-up of the school governing body will help schools understand if some groups are not represented. The results of equality monitoring can then be used to inform improvements to policies and procedures and help to identify if there is a need to target underrepresented groups as future vacancies or opportunities arise.

10. Ensure progress on delivering the schools Strategic Equality Plan is included in the Governing Body Annual Report to Parents. Schools are under a legal requirement to publish an annual report setting out progress against their Strategic Equality Plan. Schools may find it easier to cover all of the reporting requirements in the Governing Body Annual Report to Parents.



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