



STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2028

Values

Ysgol Bryn Derw is a Special School for learners with complex Autism and learning disabilities. As of Sept 2024, it has two sites across the city of Newport, for learners ages 11-19 the site is in Gaer and for aged 3-11 learners it is in Malpas. The school is host to 111 learners who come to us from a wide variety of backgrounds rich in diversity, culture and language.

The school is unique in that it does not serve a local community but hosts learners and supports their families from Newport wide.

The school plays a pivotal role in the lives of our learners and their families and is far more than just an educational provision. Many learners have come to our setting due to failed placements and inability to meet complex needs in previous placements or at the start of their education where the future is uncertain around their disability and the impact it will have on their lives.

At Ysgol Bryn Derw, as in our name 'Oak Hill,' we believe from tiny acorns mighty oaks grow. Our ethos is one of Unconditional Positive Regard and to help our learners overcome and navigate the barriers they face due to their Autism. Our aim is to make everyone when they leave us, at aged 19, as independent as possible for the next stage in their adult lives. We have high aspirations for every learner as they move through the pathways of the school and have committed staff that are 'Enabling Adults' who provide 'Engaging Experiences' through 'Effective Environments.'

Our curriculum is person-centred, and focused solely on individual need through an ongoing cycle of personalised planning, individualised teaching, small step assessment and reflection. At its core are Individual Development Plans and target setting alongside the four purposes;

- ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives.
- enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work.
- ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world.
- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

and four ASD barriers

- Communication
- Flexibility of Thought
- Social Interaction
- Emotional Regulation

As a school we care deeply about the wellbeing of our learners and have a dedicated therapies and interventions team to provide targeted and specialist intervention when needed, alongside an in-house family liaison officer who provides bespoke support and training to families. The school actively collaborates with parents, local organisations and community members, creating a strong network of support for the learners and promoting a sense of belonging for families.

****As of Sept 2025, there are 124 pupils, across three sites across the city.**

School Governance

The school is governed by a board of Governors, which includes representatives from the local authority, staff, parents and the community. Governors play a key role in shaping the school's strategic direction, overseeing financial management, ensuring the delivery of a high-quality curriculum and supporting the well-being of both learners and staff. They work closely with the Headteacher to monitor academic standards, implement policies, and create an inclusive and safe learning environment. School Governors also ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations, including safeguarding and promoting Welsh language and culture. Through their commitment and oversight, the governing body helps foster a collaborative, transparent, and accountable school community.

The School's Leadership and Support Team is made up of a Headteacher, two Deputy Headteachers, Four Assistant Headteachers, Three Phase Leaders, A therapies and interventions team- including a family liaison officer, communication lead, sensory lead, behaviour lead and independent living skills lead. All staff play a key-role in operationally implementing policies and improvement priorities.


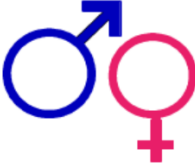

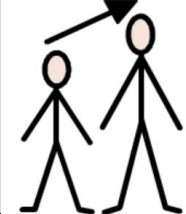

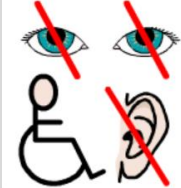






The school has a School Council who provide feedback and act as representatives of their peers when advocating for change within the school. There are two members of the school council who attend 'Newport's Grand School Council' alongside other school's in Newport.

Monitoring

This plan will be reviewed termly and progress towards objectives will be included in the Headteacher's report to Governors. The plan will be hosted on the school website enabling all stakeholders to view progress.

Demographic Data

Census Data include in the Newport City Council Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028

		
<p>Newport's population saw the greatest increase in Wales, with a rise of 9.5% to 159,600 in 2021.</p>	<p>51% of the city's population is female 49% of the city's population is male</p>	<p>20.2% of the population is below the age of 16 (slightly higher than the Welsh average)</p>
		
<p>62.9% of the population is between the ages of 16 and 64 (slightly higher than the Welsh average)</p>	<p>2.9% of the population is over the age of 65 (slightly lower than the Welsh average)</p>	<p>10.0% of the population self-identified as being disabled and limited a lot (slightly higher than the Welsh average)</p>
		
<p>19.7% of the population comes from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups (figure includes White minorities)</p>	<p>The top three religions in the Newport are: No religion (43.0%), Christianity (42.8%), and Islam (7.1%)</p>	<p>2.9% of the population identifies as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or other minority sexual orientations</p>
		
<p>0.6% of population aged 16 and over in Newport have a gender identity different from their sex at birth.</p>	<p>575 children and young people in Newport had care experience, including 348 Children Looked After, 227 Care Leavers and 30 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children as at 23/02/2024</p>	<p>54.1% of households in Newport are in material deprivation (same as the Welsh average)</p>

Group	Percentage
Eligible for Free School Meals	49%
Live in the 20% most deprived areas in Wales	39%
Additional learning needs	100%
School-based IDP	0%
LA IDP	100%
Multilingual Learners	23%
Male	85%
Female	15%

Ethnic Groups among learners and staff

Ethnic Group	2021 Census data	2024 PLASC data	
	Newport	Learners	Staff
Total Asian	7.6%	16.2%	3%
Total Black	2.3%	2.3%	0%
Total Other	1.7%	0.2%	5%
Total Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups	2.8%	6.8%	3%
Total White	85.5%	74.5%	87%
Total Unknown	0.1 %	0%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Equality Objectives and Actions

Equality Objective 1 Leadership, Governance and Involvement: the school has strong leadership and clear governance around equality, ensuring robust equitable offer to all learners across three sites, five key stages and two pathways.				
Engagement: The school has completed the following engagement exercises with relevant groups within the school community, to inform the actions planned under this objective: -Annual parent questionnaires - Parent Transition questionnaires - Parent new site questionnaire - Private fund meetings minutes -Governor meetings & minutes -SaLT clinic forum meeting minutes & PSG records				
Actions		Responsibility	Deadline	RAG rating
1	Re-model what a 'school council' looks like at YBD.	Deputy Headteacher WP	July 2026	
2	Ensure that the School council members are representative of the school's learners across protected characteristics.	DHT LF	July 2027	
3	Strengthen the range of 'pupil voice' approaches to meet needs of learners.	DHT LF Communication Lead AK	July 2026	
4	Deliver school communications to parents and carers in plain, easy to understand language with translation options available.	Headteacher RD DHTs LF & WP	July 2025	
5	Include information on progress against actions identified within the school's accessibility strategy within this strategic plan's annual report.	Headteacher RD	July 2027	
6	Facilitate equality and diversity training for all school governors, which will include Equality Impact Assessment training and awareness.	Headteacher RD Chair of Governors PH	July 2027	

Describe how this objective and its actions support wider policies, processes and legislation: This objective and associated actions have been under the principle that schools play an important role in their community. They can meet their statutory duties by being more visible around equality issues, and can better serve marginalised groups by having in place robust governance processes that ensure that key strategies to the equality's agenda i.e. **the school accessibility strategy** are relevant strategies to the school's future development.

In addition, both the objective and its actions have been strongly influenced by the principle that **Pupil Voice** is important to the development of a school's culture and the values of its learners, strongly supporting many of the principles of Equality Objective 2: Community Cohesion.

The objective also supports many of the principles within Well-being of Future Generations, including both **collaboration** (through its integration of multiple strategic priorities) and **involvement** (through its coproduction with relevant stakeholders)

Annual evaluative commentary:

- School Council re-established 2025 with SLT oversight.
- FLO caseload at anyone time includes 50%+ FSM families. FLO courses targeting all new starters and teenagers with new puberty course.
- Pupil Voice opportunities maximised with introduction of new YBD core boards, AAC project, communication boards and books and in-house SaLT clinic- continue to embed.
- Governor training in HT governor plan.

Equality Objective 2

Community Cohesion: the school promotes positive relationships between home and school and wider professionals to support families of pupils with complex additional learning needs, providing support, training and signposting.

Engagement:

The school has completed the following engagement exercises with relevant groups within the school community, to inform the actions planned under this objective:

Annual Review feedback form parents and professionals

Parent transition questionnaire feedback

Parent Questionnaire regarding FLO offer and feedback from input.

Wider Professionals Questionnaire – sent to wider professionals.

Actions		Responsibility	Deadline	RAG rating
1	To embed the Thriving Teens course and deliver to identified learner families KS3+	DHT & FLO	July 2025	
2	To continue to gather feedback from wider professionals around school positive relationships to support families	DHT	July 2026	
3	Ensure that staff training, policies and suitably address the risk factors of pupils and families and staff are confident of how to seek support.	DSP DHT	July 2025	
4	To work closely with ACE language services to provide annual access for translation of 'Roots to Shoots' Course for identified families	DHT FLO	July 2028	
5	Continue to, wherever possible messages to parents sent with ability to translate via the Seesaw app.	DHT HT	July 2028	
6	Host regular coffee mornings for parents with a wide variety of focused topics	DHT FLO	July 2028	
7	Host community road show event for families working with NCC to provide information on reducing the impact of poverty and support services available.	DHT	July 2025	

Describe how this objective and its actions support wider policies, processes and legislation: This objective has been developed to reflect the important role schools play in developing communities that are cohesive and share fundamental common values of respect and tolerance. It reflects the obligation the school has under the general duty of the equality act to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The objective supports a number of intersecting policy agendas, including **Welsh Governments Rights, Respect, Equality guidance**, the **national community cohesion agenda** and the **RSE** provision. The objective also supports many of the principles within Well-being of Future Generations, including both **involvement** (through its coproduction with relevant stakeholders) and **prevention** (through its robust commitment to ensure that learners are instilled with the values that will create more cohesive communities in the future)

Annual evaluative commentary: (Describe progress made, impact achieved and key next steps.)

- Roadshow event taken place with multiple community partners and bespoke for our families needs. Turn out 40%
- Thriving Teens course completed for identified girls. Feb 2025, attendance 95%
- Roots to Shoots course 1 completed with ACE language support- 90% attendance

Equality Objective 3

Equity in Education: the school promotes a whole school approach that is fully inclusive and looks to positively identify and address any inequality in provision, attainment, and early career pathways of vulnerable learners.

Engagement:

The school has completed the following engagement exercises with relevant groups within the school community, to inform the actions planned under this objective:

Staff Voice -

Governing body discussion - Governors felt that the school's provision for Tackling all Aspects of Poverty was strong with a range of family needs being met. All Governors felt that the school always pays consideration to the needs of those in poverty - for example in the School Uniform policy/Educational Visits policy.

Attendance Data Analysis – Continuation of Analysis of Attendance data to monitor trends, especially- if there is a correlation between those from disadvantaged backgrounds attending school less regularly than those from more advantaged backgrounds.

IEP/ Target setting data analysis- FSM V NFSM, EAL V NEAL, Boys V Girls

Pupil Success Group Referrals- % of FSM/ EAL/ Boys V Girls

Actions		Responsibility	Deadline	RAG rating
1	Work with the local authority to review learner not accessing school transport due to complex issues, in turn costing parents.	Deputy Headteacher WP	July 2025	
2	Work with the local authority to review attendance data for vulnerable groups and explore ways of securing improvement.	WP & LF	July 2025	
3	Review academic progress/attainment data for vulnerable groups and explore ways of securing improvement.	Headteacher RD DHT WP Assistant Headteacher RH	July 2025	
4	Review the cost of the school day to ensure we are inclusive of all families within our community whilst mitigating the impact of poverty.	DHT LF Family Liaison Officer	July 2026	

Describe how this objective and its actions support wider policies, processes and legislation:

This objective reflects the Welsh Government's **National Mission** to achieve high standards and aspirations for all by tackling the impact of poverty on educational attainment and supporting every learner.

This is also inline with the attendance policy aims and targets of Newport to improve school attendance.

Annual evaluative commentary: (Describe progress made, impact achieved and key next steps.)

- Nearly all learners on transport (whose parents wish them to be.) Multiple transport issues resolved, only 1 family awaiting alternative option due to complex circumstances. Parents receiving council payment for transport whilst waiting for alternative.
- YBD attendance 93.8% 24-25, FSM 93.5%. Comparison to overall primary 92.99% and overall secondary 87.76%
- IEP Attainment data 24-25 FSM pupils achieved inline with NFSM pupils.