

Pembrokeshire County Council  
Cyngor Sir Penfro

Inclusion Service  
Gwasanaeth Cynhwysiant



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# Education Inclusion Policy and Strategy

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# 1 Introduction

## Purpose of this Policy

- 1.1 The overall purpose of Pembrokeshire's Inclusion Policy is to provide a clear framework for special education provision to guide the local authority and its schools, as well as others involved in the education of Pembrokeshire's children and young people.
- 1.2 Inclusion is a process rather than a state and by its very nature will be developmental, with arrangements that change over time.

# 2 What do we mean by Inclusion?

- 2.1 The fundamental aim of an inclusive education system is to promote achievement and wellbeing for all. In essence, it means making sure that all children and young people have access to the same opportunities and services as everybody else and that their views are listened to and taken account of. The overall goal in doing so is to achieve a more prosperous, fair and tolerant society.

# 3 Who do we mean?

- 3.1 There is a wide range of young people who may be disadvantaged or vulnerable and for whom their additional learning needs arise from a wide range of personal, physical, social, emotional or cultural factors. Specific groups of disadvantaged or vulnerable young people include:
  - those with special educational needs, including pupils with cognition and learning difficulties; communication and interaction disorders; emotional, behavioural and social difficulties; sensory impairments and those with complex medical needs;
  - those from different cultural groups, such as pupils for whom English is an additional language; children of migrant workers; those seeking asylum or refugee status; minority ethnic groups; and gypsies and travellers;
  - those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, such as looked after children; young offenders; school phobics and refusers; young parents and pregnant young women; carers; pupils who are excluded from school; children and young people who are being bullied; children of families in difficult circumstances; lesbian, gay and transgender pupils; and those who are more able or talented.

# 4 Guiding Principles

- 4.1 A number of important principles guide the delivery of inclusive education approaches. They include:
  - the overwhelming majority of school age learners can and should be educated with others of their own age in their local community school, which is properly equipped and fit for purpose'
  - as wide a range of special provision as feasible should be made within mainstream provision and as early as possible;

- the first point of specialised provision would ideally be in a pupil's local mainstream school. There will be, however, occasions where the specialised provision required to meet certain types of needs will be in specialist provision with the locality or within the local authority's designated special school;
- Education Services need to offer a continuum of special provision across a range of different schools. Pupils should be able to move smoothly across the different stages of the continuum as their needs develop and change and across the different phases of education;
- pupils with additional needs require access to staff who have appropriate training, qualifications and experience in making the special provision they require and staff with appropriate curriculum expertise to enable them to access a broad, balanced and relevant education;
- the Inclusion Service staff work effectively and efficiently to support schools across all the phases of education and tiers of need to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. To do this, specialist teachers should access specialist advice, guidance and support and opportunities to pursue professional and career development in line with their areas of responsibility;
- there is a key focus on the achievement of pupils with ALN across the whole of the curriculum, which includes academic as well as their social and emotional achievements.

## 5 Statutory Requirements and the National Context

- 5.1 The development of Pembrokeshire's policy for inclusion has been guided by ensuring that statutory requirements are being fulfilled and in a manner consistent with guidance from national government and other bodies. These include:

The *1988 Education Reform Act* that was the first legislation that introduced explicitly the entitlement of all children and young people to a 'balanced and broadly based curriculum' in their education.

A number of major implications under Part III of the *1993 Education Act* relating to special educational needs (SEN) that were subsequently incorporated into the *1996 Education Act*. These included the requirement on local authorities to educate children and young people with special educational needs in mainstream schools where practicable.

The *1996 Education Act* has been guided by the *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. This has been drawn up by a UNESCO World Conference in 1994. It set out the expectation that '*all governments should adopt, as a matter of law or policy, the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise*'.

Both the *2002 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act* and the *2002 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales* built on the *1996 Education Act*. They strengthened the right of children and young people to be educated within a mainstream school. The SEN Code of Practice stressed, in particular, the important role and responsibility all teachers have in the education of pupils with special educational needs.

The Welsh Government's publications, '*The Learning Country*' in 2001 and '*The Learning Country II – Vision into Action*' in 2006, set out the vision and highlighted progress towards securing the best possible learning experiences for vulnerable

children and young people. They also recognised that creating an effective, inclusive education environment means providing support within the learning setting and incorporating the wider aspects of learning and experience.

The 2006 Welsh Government's publication '*Inclusion and Pupil Support*' (Guidance Circular No 47/2006) set out in detail recommendations for inclusive education in Wales. It also referred to other circulars and guidance documentation that focus on specific groups of children and young people.

Other important legislation and Welsh Government guidance includes:

- *1989 Children Act*
- *1995 Disability Discrimination Act*
- *2001 Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality*
- *2002 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act*
- *2005 Disability Discrimination Act*
- *2005 Planning to increase access to schools for disabled pupils (Guidance Circular No 15/2005)*
- *2007 Promoting Disability Equality in Schools*
- *2010 A Curriculum for All Learners*
- *2010 Estyn Common Inspection Framework*
- *2013 Estyn Supplementary Guidance for Inspecting Additional Learning Needs*

## **6 Local Context**

- 6.1 The Inclusion Policy assists in implementing the County's integrated plan, whose overarching aim is for all children, young people and families to fulfil their learning potential and to live healthy and happy lives.
- 6.2 More specifically, the County will be pursuing a range of actions to improve services for young people with additional needs or that require additional support. This will include developing a single co-ordinated referral pathway for inclusion and wellbeing services. The County will also be improving the effectiveness of the Education Psychology Service and reconfiguring specialist educational facilities for young people who have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.
- 6.3 The Inclusion Policy also contributes to the Inclusion Strategy, Child Protection Strategy and Policy, Looked After Children (Education) Strategy and Policy, Wellbeing, Behaviour and Attendance Strategy and Policy, Inclusion Service Business Plan, Education Service Plan and the Accessibility Strategy.

## **7 Roles and Responsibilities**

The effectiveness of translating the principles, policies and values into practice is dependent upon the collaboration of all partners to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

These include:

7.1 The **Local Education Authority**, whose role it is to:

- ensure that inclusion is central to all permeates all aspects of policy and proactive;
- seek to identify early and minimise barriers to inclusion and learning through effective intervention approaches;
- work with partners to ensure that support matches need through effective training and targeted resourcing;
- carry out regular self-evaluation of LA provision and its effectiveness in enhancing inclusive education;
- capitalise on existing good practice and provision;
- closely monitor and evaluate, in partnership with learners, parents, schools and other providers the impact of policies and provision on learner inclusion and achievement;
- search for new ideas to include learners and enable them to achieve.

7.2 **Mainstream community schools**, whose role it is to carry out regular self-evaluation of their working practices in providing inclusive education to ensure:

- good pupil outcomes academically, socially and emotionally;
- an appropriate learning experience;
- appropriate teaching is in place to meet pupil needs;
- appropriate care, support and guidance;
- an appropriate learning environment;
- good leadership;
- evidence of improving quality;
- good partnership working;
- well-managed resources.

7.3 **The Special School**, whose role it is to help children and young people who have more complex and challenging needs. They provide nearly all of the range of opportunities listed above, together with additional, specialised support for learner to help them overcome specific barriers to learning and inclusion. In relation to mainstream colleagues, special school staff will:

- provide advice and guidance, as well as training opportunities, to help mainstream colleagues to develop their professional knowledge and skills in the context of special educational needs;
- support schools in the inclusion of complex learners with special education needs to give them appropriate and effective strategies.

## 8 Developing an Inclusion Strategy

8.1 In order to implement Pembrokeshire's Inclusion Policy, a strategy for inclusion has been developed, which incorporates a number of specific projects. These will form the basis of the Educational Inclusion Programme, which aims to:

- build capacity in mainstream schools for meeting the broad range of pupil needs, through training, support and improvements in the physical environment;
- ensure that process are in place to help schools, services and the authority as a whole to evaluate the effectiveness of policies and provision and to ensure that young people with additional needs achieve the best possible outcomes;

- maximise the use of resources at the appropriate level (school, cluster, local authority) to support the development and extension of good practices and associated levels of accessibility;
- promote active engagement in the range of stakeholders, including parents/carers and young people and the range of relevant statutory agencies and voluntary bodies.