

Glasllwch Primary School

Pupil Participation Policy

This policy is a	LA Template Policy adopted by school
This policy is	Statutory
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Staff Area / Subject Leader	Chris Jackson
Link Governor	Matthew Evans
Key Personnel in Policy	Head Teacher, Equalities Leader
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Aims of Policy:

- To outline the functioning of Pupil Participation policy and practice in School.

Previous review date	September 2021
Review date	January 2023
Next review date	January 2027
Reviewed by	Policy committee



PUPIL PARTICIPATION POLICY

OVERALL PRINCIPLES

Glasllwch Primary School values the views of all its members. This policy outlines how learning at Glasllwch Primary School is enhanced by exploring the thoughts and feelings of children within the school. Pupil participation is embedded in all aspects of school life. We provide children with opportunities to contribute to school improvement because we believe listening to learners is fundamental to their wellbeing.

Our school aspires to enhance each child's self-esteem; providing a safe and secure environment in which they feel confident to take risks and strive to reach their full potential. Through recognising and celebrating achievement, we encourage every child to view themselves as a successful individual.

We believe that engaging our children in 'learning about learning' (metacognition) enables them to develop a deeper understanding of themselves as learners and therefore equips them with a greater capacity to learn. Our school ethos and the positive relationships established within our school community promote the value of learning and create a desire for children to become lifelong learners.

As a school we work alongside children to develop children as:

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

Glasllwch Primary School believes:

- Every child has an entitlement to personal, social and intellectual development and must be given an opportunity to achieve their potential in learning.

- Every child is unique in terms of characteristics, interest, abilities, motivation and learning needs.
- Education systems should be designed to take into account these wide diversities.
- Those with exceptional learning needs and/or disabilities should have access to high quality and appropriate education.

OUR VISION

The development of Pupil Voice will enable learners to explore and share their views of the school learning environment and their experiences as learners. This will enable the school community to ensure pupils have greater involvement in establishing an ethos of mutual contribution and increased ownership of their learning experiences, therefore engaging and motivating learners to achieve and reach their full potential.

POLICY CONTEXT

The importance of children's rights and their relevance to education has been increasingly recognised. This has led to a range of legalisation that has emphasised the importance of listening to children and involving them in decision-making. Within education, systems are being developed to consult with children about school experience, progress in learning and wellbeing. This approach is reflected in the new Curriculum for Wales Guidance, September 2022.

Involving all children is challenging both in principle and in practice. Yet, aside from any legal requirements; research and practice indicate that there are real benefits to be gained from pupil participation. Participation helps education to develop to meet changing needs. It can give children influence and an increased choice over the provision offered. It helps empower them, giving a sense of self efficacy, which raises self-esteem. This is important for all children especially young people with additional learning needs. Ultimately, pupil participation can enhance the democratic process, enabling children to become active, responsible citizens.

Involvement of children and young people can easily become 'tokenistic'. There is a need for all staff to find ways to communicate effectively with a range of children. Participation is only meaningful within the context of an inclusive school where all children have access to a coherent and progressive curriculum. Children need to experience a wide social circle and to encounter a broad range of peers with different strengths and perspectives. The success of participation, like the success of inclusion,

depends upon the involvement of all teachers and staff working with a sense of common purpose to support the learning needs of all children.

The underlying vision of child-centred schools is of an education system that helps to create a democratic, people-oriented society that respects the differences and dignity of all beings.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Entitlement:** Children have a right to participate and to be listened to. When developing educational policy, local and central government must ensure that consulting with children is at the heart of all multi-agency working.
- **Empowerment:** All children need to feel that they are valued and important and can make a difference. Being consulted and allowed to make choices from an early age helps to develop emotional growth and self-awareness. Directly involving children in their education enhances their engagement and promotes active learning. This expands their horizons and increases the choices open to them about their future. It helps to ensure that the education they receive is relevant to their needs.
- **Equal opportunities:** Consulting effectively with children can be challenging for staff, particularly when communicating with younger children, those with significant learning difficulties and those who have become disengaged from education for a number of reasons. In order to make this a meaningful task, attention must be paid to language so that young people understand what is available and can make informed choices. The curriculum needs to be properly differentiated and resourced to address pupil's individual learning patterns and interests. Alternative options needs to be properly resourced to allow each child, wherever possible, to fulfil his/her potential.
- **Learner Progress:** Pupil participation can help to improve pupil progress. Progress is supported by a curriculum that meets individual needs. Careful consideration should be given to pupil groupings to ensure that those with learning, emotional, social or behavioural difficulties do not feel marginalised or de-motivated.
- **Protection:** Promoting pupil participation is an important aid to their self-protection. Apart from parents and carers, it is staff in schools that are best placed to notice early signs of distress and symptoms of abuse. A recurrent theme of successive inquiries into abuse has been the failure to listen to children.
- **Democracy:** Involving children in decisions about their learning and the educational environment will help to prepare them for making important choices as adults. Giving more power to children can lead to more motivated and engaged children and less staff/pupil contact. Representative democracy is strengthened as young people gain greater skills in communication, listening, negotiation and peaceful conflict resolution.

- **Respect:** Pupil participation can only flourish in an environment where teachers and other staff have a shared sense of responsibility for supporting and learning from one another and where young people are encouraged to build collaborative relationships with their peers.

PUPIL PARTICIPATION AIMS

Glasllwch Primary School believes that we should:

- Regard the involvement of children in decisions about their education as essential to good practise.
- Include children in reviewing and monitoring their own progress. This involves reducing barriers to participation, with attention to language and level of understanding. Children should be helped to identify next steps in their learning and behaviour and be provided with opportunities for on-going review and feedback.
- Foster a whole school ethos in which all children are valued and encouraged to express their opinions, and take decisions from an early age. Create structures and mechanisms for listening to children and responding to their views, and monitor their effectiveness. Develop constructive alliances between children based upon tolerance and respect of individual differences.
- Recognise that pupil participation can only become a reality in an environment where all staff are valued and involved in decisions affecting the school community. Relationships between adults should act as the model for the desired relationships between young people.
- Provide training and professional development to assist staff in developing models of good practise that support the inclusion of children with disabilities and those with emotional and social needs.
- Carefully prepare children when attending reviews so that they can fully participate, offering facilitation for those less able to cope with meetings. Create a positive climate where children and parents are made to feel welcome.
- Ensure that all children have access to a coherent and progressive curriculum, properly resourced with a wide range of social opportunities. Put in place systems which allow children to have a greater say in the content of the curriculum and how they would like to learn.
- Offer guidance and support to both new and experienced staff in managing diverse classrooms and in developing individualised learning programmes.
- Act as an empathic guide and advocate for the child equipping him/her with skills to respect different opinions and diverse cultures. This includes learning how to negotiate with others, and to make compromises when appropriate.
- Work in a partnership with parents whilst, at the same time, exercising sensitivity when children views differ from those of their parents.

- Collaborate with other agencies to ensure a 'holistic' approach. Exercise care and sensitivity when sharing information, in order to respect confidentiality without compromising the safety of the child. Help other agencies to recognise that there are usually educational implications when children are experiencing health or social problems.

Pupils who participate in decision-making enjoy enhanced self-esteem and motivation, gain important personal, social and organisational skills, and become familiar with group and democratic processes. At the organisational level, pupil involvement in decision-making leads to better relationships, more relevant and effective policies, and better learning. In the best scenarios, pupils and adults work together as partners to ensure that their school provides the best possible learning environment for all. Pupils have an important part to play in helping their school to improve in every aspect of school life.

(Pupil Voice Wales Website, 2010)

SENEDD GLASLLWCH

Involving our children in realising our school vision and aims is a fundamental aspect of our philosophy and approach to pupil participation. One of the mechanisms through which children are empowered to shape their school experience is through Senedd Glasllwch. The following model illustrates the structure of Senedd Glasllwch.



Our Senedd Glasllwch structure provides children from across the school with the opportunity to express their views about school life in a forum where they will be listened to and action taken when appropriate.

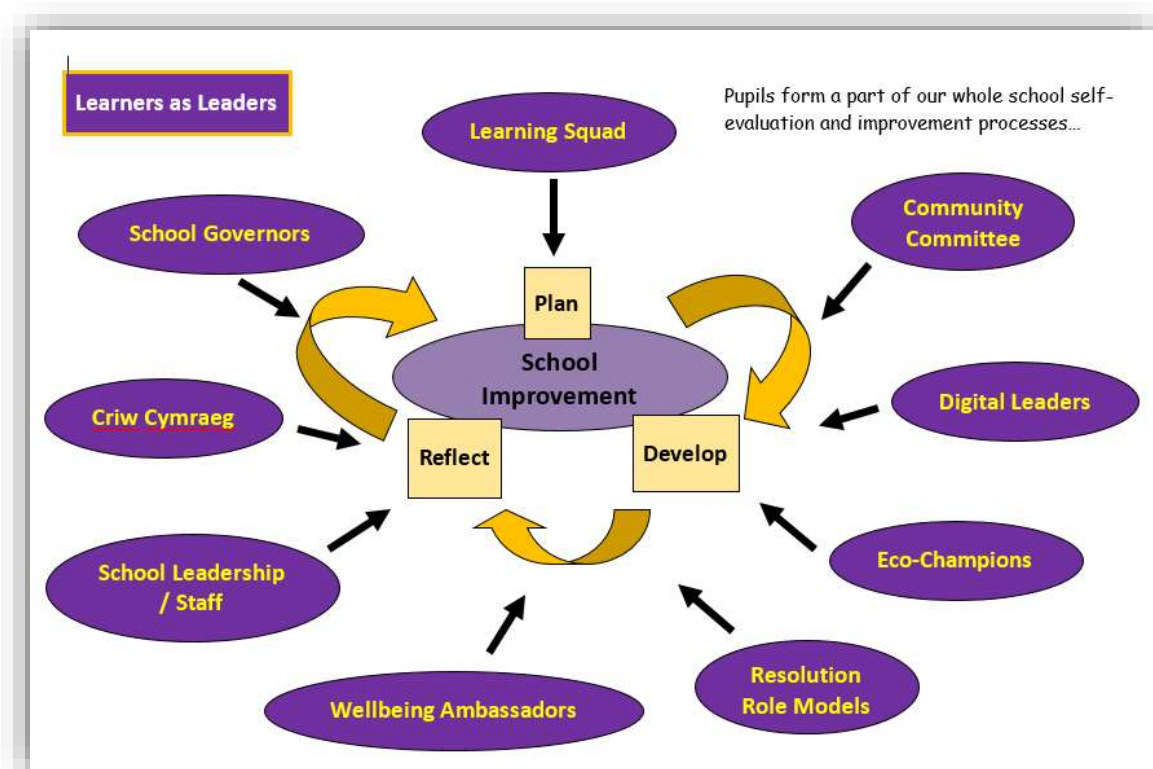
Children are elected to become members of our pupil groups in a variety of ways, these include: writing and presenting manifestos followed by a secret ballot; written application; or application followed by an interview. Children may be elected as a member of a pupil group for up to 2 consecutive years, after this time they are encouraged to run/apply for a different pupil group. Elections take place at the beginning of each academic year.

On an annual basis, each group contributes to our Senedd Glasllwch Action Plan which forms a key part of our Whole School Development Plan. Each group meets on a regular basis, with a supporting adult, to develop ideas and actions linked to their action plan targets. A visual representation of our Senedd Glasllwch Action Plan, in the form of a Kanban, is displayed in the main school building for everyone to refer to.

During pupil group meetings children may, for example: engage in team building activities; discuss developments linked to their agreed actions; carry out research, including data collection and analysis; create presentations or assemblies; trial new ideas; identify next steps. In each of these meetings minutes are taken and follow-up actions agreed.

On a half-termly basis, two nominated ministers from each group (usually Year 6 children) meet with a member of SLT and our school Pupil Participation Lead to share developments and next steps. The ministers take on a Chairperson and Secretary role within their pupil group.

The following model illustrates our Senedd Glasllwch pupil groups participate within our school improvement processes.



SENEDD GLASLLWCH - ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following information outlines the roles and responsibilities of each pupil group and how children across the school are represented within these groups.

Community Committee - Our Community Committee actively participate in engaging with and improving our school community. Their role is to build links with others in our school community, including raising money for charities locally, nationally and internationally. Our Community Committee is made up of two representatives from each class Reception to Year 6.

Eco Champions - Our Eco Champions formulate and then implement actions for environmental improvement. Learners discuss ways of improving their school environment, from litter collection to establishing ways of conserving energy in the school. They work alongside teachers, parents and governors to implement initiatives to protect and enhance our local environment. Our Eco Champions include two representatives from each class Reception to Year 6. Glasllwch has received their Platinum Award for continued work in the environment.

Wellbeing Ambassadors - Our Wellbeing Ambassadors promote health & wellbeing across our school. Their role is to encourage everyone to eat a healthy and balanced diet, as well as educating everyone about Children's Rights and the UNCRC. They also play an active role in promoting mental health and fitness. Our Wellbeing Ambassadors include two representatives from each class Reception to Year 6.

Two of our Year 6 Wellbeing Ambassadors take on the role of **Super Ambassadors**, they work specifically to carry out 'Special Missions' for the children's commissioner - Rocio Cifuentes. These 'missions' involve helping other children in the school learn about the UNCRC through whole school assemblies, class activities, surveys and live webinars.

Digital Leaders - The role of our Digital Leaders is to improve ICT and Digital Competency across the school. The children create online videos and/or deliver lessons to support other children in using ICT. They work alongside our ICT Leader to promote the implementation of the DCF. The Digital Leaders also maintain the ICT equipment and promote e-safety within school. Two of the Digital Leaders form part of our school E-Safety Group, working alongside staff, parents and Governors to ensure robust e-safety policies and procedures are in place. Digital Leaders are elected from Years 4, 5 and 6.

Learning Squad - Our Learning Squad explore issues raised by children across the school and identify aspects of school life they would like to research and improve. Their role is to improve learning and our school curriculum through a research and enquiry approach. Children are encouraged to become independent thinkers who ask questions, carry out research methods, analyse and share their findings with a number of audiences,

including: other children, teaching and support staff, PTA, Head teacher and L.A. Schools. Members of the Learning Squad are encouraged to consider the impact of their research projects and evaluate the improvements that have been made. Learning Squad is made up of representatives from Years 4, 5 and 6.

Criw Cymraeg - The role of Criw Cymraeg is to promote our Welsh language, culture and heritage across school. Criw Cymraeg are responsible for sharing a Welsh phrase of the week, awarding certificates to Pupil of the Week (for speaking Welsh around school) and for leading Welsh assemblies. The children teach their peers Welsh playground games and sing Welsh songs; they also lead our Welsh prayer in assemblies. Criw Cymraeg is made up of children from Year 5 and 6.

Resolution Role Models - Our Resolution Role Models help children to find resolutions to their problems using peer-mediation (Playground Pals). They also model positive attitudes and behaviours, taking on the role of Heddlu Bach.

Glasllwch Playground Pals are all trained peer mediators. Peer-mediation is a process in which two children, who have been trained in mediation skills, encourage students who are in conflict to find ways of solving the problem they face or to explore new ways of looking at the situation.

Once qualified, our peer mediators are available on the yard at lunchtimes to guide other children through a structured mediation process with the aim of helping those involved to find their own solutions to the conflict.

Children will be able to:

- Understand and resolve conflict more constructively without intervention from staff.
- Take ownership of problems.
- Develop skills to enhance their social, emotional and mental well-being.
- Transfer these skills outside school and later on in life.
- Be more accepting of people's differences.
- Show empathy to their peers.
- See other people's points of view.
- Learn to respect and value themselves and others.
- Recognise the effects of their actions on others.

The peer-mediation training links to our RSE and RVE curriculum. It fosters a healthy school environment which will help to reduce absenteeism and bullying. The training promotes positive life skills such as: speaking and listening, critical thinking, negotiation, teamwork, respect and tolerance.

Our Heddlu Bach engage in specific training with Gwent Police. They support Gwent Police via participation in both educational and community environments, developing

confidence through a variety of activities. Their role is to help tackle local issues, highlighted by the children, in our local community, working alongside local Neighborhood Police Teams on crime prevention initiatives. Taking on a Heddlu Bach role helps children to develop as ethically informed citizens of Wales.

GLASLLWCH PUPIL PARTICIPATION & WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

Our Pupil Participation & Wellbeing Framework was developed primarily to make clear links between pupil participation opportunities within our school and their direct relation to children's wellbeing. Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, our Pupil Participation & Wellbeing Framework illustrates WHAT pupil participation looks like within our school and HOW pupil participation activities have been built into all aspects of school life. In this framework pupil participation has been organised under three main headings:

- The Learning Environment - Feeling Safe and Comfortable
- Building Collaborative Relationships - Making a Positive Contribution
- Developing Children's Capacity to Learn - Learning about Learning (Metacognition)

Our Aspirations for the framework:

- Support children in developing towards the Four Purposes
- Encourage independent learning
- Improve progress and achievement
- Develop skills and confidence for active participation
- Improve student/teacher relationships and behaviour
- Encourage sense of belonging and increase self-esteem
- Develop links with the community and increase school profile
- Recognise wide range of achievement and promote inclusion
- Improve school democracy
- Deliver the RSE/RVE curriculum
- Develop enterprise skills

The Four Purposes of the Curriculum for Wales are woven throughout our Pupil Participation and Wellbeing Framework, ensuring children develop as:

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

WHAT IT CAN LOOK LIKE...

Developing Children's Capacity To Learn

1. Powerful cognitive and meta-cognitive approaches—learners increasingly understand themselves as learners and can verbalise that understanding
2. Children recognising ways to improve — what and how
3. Learners voice how they learn best, strategies they use, and make links within learning — choose success
4. Pupils as leaders, researchers and co-enquirers at a whole school level — using findings to influence improvement and initiative - link to SDP
5. Children offer ideas about how to judge what a school is like, involving learners in school self-evaluation
6. Pupils as learners - feedback on teaching and learning opportunities, considering learning styles, MI, etc
7. Pupils involved in sculpting the curriculum and organising learning—improving relevance and raising interest
8. Children making choices about learning, developing ideas, asking questions—raising lines of enquiry
9. Promoting a Growth Mindset thought all aspects of school life

Building Collaborative Relationships

1. Philosophical Value—pupil involvement as a manifestation of inclusion principles
2. Feedback enables children to recognise their own & others success/achievement
3. Pupils as leaders—are involved in school and community development
4. Pupils understand evaluation and how they contribute to school improvement
5. Relationships support learning practices and cultures — pupils as peer tutors
6. Classrooms characterised by motivational climate, engagement and learning behaviours
7. Pupil involvement in assertive discipline—establishing expectations/rules/routines
8. Pupils understand their own and others emotions —developing E.I. — build trust and confidence

The Learning Environment

1. Seek pupils views of the school learning environment
2. Pupils suggest ways to improve facilities and the environment, making it more conducive to learning—ensure basic needs met

Glasllwch Pupil Participation & Wellbeing Framework

Based on Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs

HOW IT CAN BE ACHIEVED...

Learning About Learning

1. Learning Conversations/Reviews (child—teacher—parent) creating opportunities to share learning experiences
2. AfL— self-assessment & peer-assessment, involving learners in generating success criteria
3. Developing Thinking - learning stories/caterpillars, reflection triangles, learning diaries, etc
4. Involve children in research and development activities, interviewing other children about aspects of learning, such as AfL - share findings SLT/ Govs
5. Pupil Groups links with other schools to undertake self-evaluation (School to school working)
6. Involve children in dialogue about quality teaching and learning —focus groups review lessons
7. Pupils asked what they think they should learn, what they want to learn and how learning could be organised.
8. Knowledge Harvest — what they know and what they would like to find out — learning walls, mind-maps, bubbles, etc
9. Learners are praised for effort and resilience—Learning Pits used to reflect on learning

Making a Positive Contribution

1. School ethos values children as stakeholders and recognises their contribution
2. Pupil Surveys /Research on aspects such as marking and feedback—discuss responses
3. Learners audit extra-curricular activities, evaluating why people do/don't take part
4. Pupils have opportunity to be involved in improvement, e.g. Senedd Glasllwch pupil groups
5. Pupils to consider qualities of a good teacher and positive learning experiences, (support, independence)
6. Ask pupils how they know they have achieved - consider ways of assessing/reviewing success
7. Pupils asked—how can school help you behave responsibly and show respect?
8. Jigsaw approach embedded throughout curriculum— voicing concerns, taking positive action

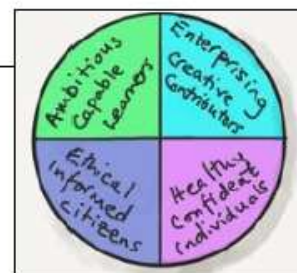
Feeling Safe & Comfortable

1. Learners voice what make them enjoy, feel happy, healthy, safe?
2. Children take Learning Walks of the building and grounds with a digital camera - share views, code a map, etc

Need to reach full potential

LEARNING

Need to know, to explore, to understand



Need to achieve and be recognised

EMOTIONAL LOVE & ESTEEM

Need to belong and to love and be loved

Need to be secure and safe out of danger

BASIC PHYSICAL NEEDS & SAFETY

Need to satisfy hunger, thirst, sleep, etc

PARTICIPATION WITHIN OUR CURRICULUM

Involving Parents & Carers - When beginning a project, a curriculum update is made available to parents/carers via our school website; this update shares some of the learning opportunities that will be incorporated into the project, including the Project Goal. This update creates opportunity for children to discuss with their parent/carer what they would like to learn during their project. Often, online tools such as Jamboard and Padlet are used to gather learning suggestions from children and parents as a Home Learning activity.

Throughout projects, learning experiences are shared regularly with parents through Seesaw, again providing an opportunity for parents to engage in learning conversations with their child. Parents are encouraged to bring relevant interests and expertise into school to enhance curriculum projects.

Creating Authentic Learning Experiences - At the beginning of a project the children engage in discussions with their peers and the class teacher; they share ideas for learning opportunities within the project, focusing on the Four Purposes. Project titles are chosen to be inspiring and relevant to children, enabling them to be engaged by authentic learning contexts. Children share their existing knowledge of a project or theme with staff and, through discussion, identify how learning within the project may develop them as:

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

These discussions should be used as an opportunity to elicit the children's existing skills, knowledge and understanding of a theme. Approaches such as: Thinking Maps, KWL grids, thought bubbles, Floor Books, etc. should be used to record what the children know and what they want to learn. Choices about HOW they want to learn should also be considered. These suggestions will usually be recorded in the children's project books or in some cases in a class Floor Book. Ideas and questions generated by the children are recorded either on the class Learning Wall or in class Floor Books; these are updated as a project evolves.

Pupil Informing Planning - Curriculum planning is designed to develop specific skills, knowledge, understanding and experiences, appropriate to the cohort age-group and ability; these project plans include learning opportunities that have been generated by the children. As a starting point, curriculum planning identifies the aspects of the 4 purposes being developed through each project. These pupil informed learning opportunities are based on the children's initial and

on-going interests/suggestions. Alongside influencing curriculum content, pupil participation opportunities may also include children choosing HOW to learn and WHO to learn with.

'Flexibility and choice need to be encouraged as part of the personalisation of the curriculum at all phases, as they promote motivation.'

(MAURICE SMITH, HMCI)

Evaluating Learning - Throughout a project and at the end of a project, children are given opportunities to evaluate their learning and reflect on the ideas and questions they raised at the beginning of the project. Questions and ideas may be added at various points during a project as learning takes place. Children use Assessment for Learning strategies, Thinking Skills, Growth Mindset, etc., to reflect on their learning (metacognition). Opportunities for children to evaluate their learning on an ongoing basis should be planned for and evident within their project books/Floor Books.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Pupil participation is embedded in all aspects of our school life. We provide children with opportunities to contribute to school improvement because we believe pupil participation is fundamental to children's wellbeing and development as successful individuals and to the success of our school. Through pupil participation we encourage all children to think about their rights and responsibilities and those of others.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people a comprehensive set of rights. It sets out in detail what every child needs to have a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood regardless of their sex, religion, social origin, and where and to whom they were born. The Convention gives children and young people over 40 substantive rights, including the right to:

- special protection measures and assistance
- access to services such as education and healthcare
- develop their personalities, abilities and talents to the fullest potential
- grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding
- be informed about and participate in achieving their rights in an accessible and active manner.

At Glasllwch Primary School we are committed to the UNCRC and to its implementation. We aim to ensure that children are aware of their rights as stated in the UNCRC. We encourage the children to recognise and value their own rights and the rights of others. We believe our

children are treated fairly and with respect; we strive to support children in overcoming challenges and give them the confidence to reach their full potential, in a safe and secure environment. Human Rights is a cross-cutting theme which is woven throughout our curriculum.

The Welsh Assembly Government's approach to children and young people's participation is based on the principles enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales have been developed to improve the process of children and young people's participation in decision-making. The Participation Standards measure the 'quality' of the process of children and young people's participation against key agreed indicators. At Glasllwch Primary School we use the National Participation Standards as a framework against which to self-evaluate pupil participation in our school.

A.L.N.

All children, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) or more-able and talented learners, are enabled to have full access to their entitlement to a progressive, coherent and relevant curriculum. Glasllwch provides provision through a universal, targeted and specialist approach, dependent on need. This approach includes any additional challenge or support required to meet the needs of learners and promote inclusion. Provision ensures all children are both supported in overcoming barriers to learning, as well as being challenged through extending the breadth and depth of their learning experiences. This includes supporting access via: physical, visual, auditory, emotional, behavioural and social, cognitive, literary, numerical and digital pathways; as well as on focusing on supporting learners to develop into ambitious, healthy, ethical and enterprising individuals.

EQUALITY STATEMENT

OUR VISION FOR EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION

We seek to remove barriers to learning with imaginative curriculum delivery that will use the best of innovative educational practice and enterprise to transform learning and teaching. We seek to provide an inspirational learning environment based on a personalised style of learning. Learning is at our core and we believe it will broaden horizons, raise aspirations and enhance Children's self-confidence as successful learners, both now and in the future. Children will have every opportunity to achieve standards that match their potential and to gain successes as effective lifelong learners. We are committed to equality of opportunity and access for all our children and to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equalities Act 2010. We further recognise the 9 protected characteristics as detailed in the Act. We will advance equality of opportunity between all children and foster good relationships between all our children and our stakeholders.