

Developing a
single equality policy
for your school: a CSIE guide



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Published by

Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE)

New Redland Building, Coldharbour Lane, Frenchay, Bristol BS16 1QU

www.csie.org.uk

Registered Charity 327805

Registered Company 2253521

Written by current and former CSIE staff and associates, with contributions from professionals working towards greater equality in education.

CSIE gratefully acknowledges the contributions of: South Gloucestershire Council, for initiating and part funding this project and for the time and energy of Marcus John, Headteacher of Bromley Heath Junior School, towards shaping this guide; Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Durham, Haringey Hertfordshire, Kirklees and Sheffield local authorities, for generously sharing their materials, a number of which have informed this new CSIE guide;¹ officers from Cheshire, Kent, Lancashire, Newham, Norfolk and Somerset local authorities, as well as independent consultant Robin Richardson, all of whom read and commented on earlier drafts of this guide.

¹ Community Cohesion & Equality Strategy and Policy: 'Stronger and Cohesive Communities in Buckinghamshire' (Buckinghamshire); Equality and Community Cohesion in Cambridgeshire Schools: Making Children Matter (Cambridgeshire); Equality, Diversity and Cohesion: Model Policy for Schools (Durham); Haringey Schools Equality Scheme Guidance (Haringey); Equality and diversity: A service delivery toolkit for schools (Hertfordshire); four documents from Kirklees Council (Equality and Diversity: An enabling framework for treating everyone fairly and valuing diversity; Equality and Diversity Policy Statement; Equality and Diversity Strategy – Action Plan 2007-2010; Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment Toolkit) and a link to Kirklees Council's innovative Impact Assessments in the form of 'the big picture' storyboards; Guidance on developing an equality scheme for schools (Sheffield City Council).



ISBN 978 1 872001 63 0

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Design by www.intertype.co.uk

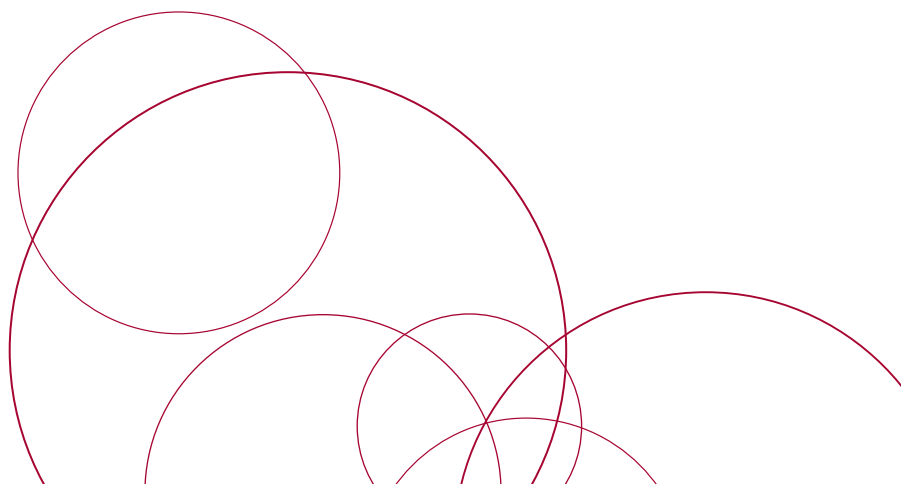
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Does my school need to have a single equality policy?

Under existing legislation, schools can decide whether to produce a single equality policy or maintain separate policies for race/ethnicity equality, disability equality, gender equality and community cohesion. They can also decide whether to publish one combined or three separate equality schemes.

New legislation is being formulated at the time of writing this guide. A new Equality Bill was published in April 2009 and is expected to come into force in 2011, seeking to harmonize discrimination law and strengthen equality rights for a wider range of people. For more information please see page 5.

If your school decides to produce a single equality policy at this stage, this will stand you in good stead when new legislation comes into force. In order to comply with existing duties, you will need to ensure that all statutory requirements, including the publication of equality scheme(s), are met.

This guide can help you develop a single equality policy for your school, addressing the existing legal duties; it will be revised when all details of the new legislation have been confirmed.



Introduction

CSIE understands equality in education to mean that all children and young people who live in a school's locality, no matter what their background, circumstances or perceived ability, belong in the local community and share the same rights to membership and a quality education in their local neighbourhood school. The question, if one needs to be asked, is not to consider current patterns of provision as fixed and ask "can this young person fit in to our school?" but to assume that all young people who live locally belong to the school community and ask "how can we provide for this young person?" At a time when equality for all is legally endorsed, schools are called upon to work closely with each other and with their local authority, in order to provide quality education for all.

None of this is new. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) has the principle of non-discrimination at its heart. Article 2 states that all rights specified in the Convention should be respected "without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status." The UK government ratified this Convention in 1991, which means it is legally bound by it, and its implementation is regularly monitored by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. The UK's most recent examination was in 2008, when the Committee criticized the government for still failing to uphold the right of all children "to a truly inclusive education which ensures the full enjoyment to children from all disadvantaged, marginalised and school-distant groups".²

Existing UK legislation stipulates that schools have a legal duty to promote race, disability and gender equality and to promote community cohesion. Plans are under way to introduce a new Equality Act that brings all existing, as well as a number of additional, equality duties under one piece of legislation.

Three separate former Commissions (the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission) have disbanded and their functions have been taken over by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which came into being in October 2007.

The legal requirement for documentation

At the time of writing this guide (December 2009) all public bodies, including schools, are required by law to publish their policy on race, disability and gender equality and to produce related equality schemes. Organisations are legally permitted to continue to publish separate documents or to combine them into a single document if they prefer. Within the past 2-3 years a number of public bodies including the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) and the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) have produced, or are in the process of producing, a single equality scheme addressing all current statutory duties in one document. A number of local authorities have issued guidance for their schools on how to do the same. This CSIE guide draws on existing examples of good practice and aims to help your school develop a single equality policy. Over and above supporting a paper exercise, it seeks to help schools engage with key issues of equality, find ways to challenge prejudice or discrimination and promote equality for all.

² Concluding observations of the 49th session of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child CRC/C/GBR/CO/4 20 October 2008

Four distinct duties?

Four statutory responsibilities may appear daunting to busy practitioners whose primary responsibility is to support the learning and development of the young people in their school. Four separate sets of responsibilities stemming from four separate Acts of Parliament, originating from different government departments; is this enough to overwhelm the most committed practitioner? We suggest that there is a common thread connecting all of these legal duties, which has been at the heart of inclusive school development for many years: respect for each other.

These legal duties have been introduced as a means to avoid discrimination, promote equality for all and guard against anyone becoming marginalised, excluded or rejected. Schools that have been developing more inclusive provision will already be thinking and acting along these lines, at least to some extent. However, framing our thinking around separate dichotomies (for example female/male, disabled/non-disabled) can become problematic, as there are no fixed and uncontested boundaries within any of these. Furthermore, by considering these issues separately, we risk overlooking the fact that we all have multiple identities that transgress equality issues.

The significance of the requirement for schools to demonstrate respect for all, and to do this clearly and consistently, is evident in the revised Ofsted inspection framework. This identifies equality and diversity as one of four areas³ that can constitute a limiting judgement. In other words, if inspectors find a school to be inadequate or satisfactory on matters of equality and diversity, then the overall effectiveness of the school cannot be judged to be higher than satisfactory or good, respectively. One of the key issues for inspectors to explore when considering equality and diversity is “the extent to which the school has regard for the Human Rights Act by promoting respect for human rights through developing understanding about differences and valuing diverse experiences”.⁴

The need for schools to understand and respect human rights is also evident in the UNICEF UK initiative Rights Respecting School Award (www.rrsa.org.uk). This has been developed in response to the challenges facing schools in working

with the whole school community to define a clear set of shared values. The initiative is designed to help schools use the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a framework to support this work. Schools that have taken part in this initiative have reported a significant positive impact on children and young people’s well-being and on school improvement.

Only statutory responsibilities?

Framing these legal duties as statutory responsibilities may make them appear as additional considerations imposed by the government upon busy practitioners, over and above all other duties already on their shoulders. It might also amount to saying that we need to show respect to each other just because the government says that we should. Is it appropriate, though, to see these as separate considerations, introduced over and above educators’ main responsibilities? Or might they instead be seen as fundamental considerations underpinning everything that goes on in schools? CSIE suggests that attending to ethnicity, disability and gender equality and to community cohesion should underpin every aspect of school life, as a matter of basic human rights. Legislation aside, we suggest that the need to show respect to each other should first and foremost be determined by our own values. With this in mind, it is entirely appropriate to consider these to be moral duties, as well as statutory responsibilities.

Are some more equal than others?

In George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* Napoleon the pig famously claims that some animals are more equal than others. Is any of us immune from the danger of holding assumptions that remain unchallenged and distort the way we “talk the talk” and/or “walk the walk”? As you prepare to formulate value statements on equality issues and write them into a policy document, just take a moment to consider how these may find expression in a range of situations. If your policy states that all young people who live within a particular geographical area are welcome to attend your school, does all really mean all? If a young person from a developing country who speaks very little English applies for a place, will he or she feel welcomed by the whole school community? If your policy states that your school is an equal opportunities employer, how does this look in practice? If a disabled adult applies for a job, how might the school’s equality statement be evident in the reaction this applicant receives?

³ The other three areas are: achievement, safeguarding and capacity to improve.

⁴ Ofsted (2010) *The evaluation schedule for schools: Guidance and grade descriptors for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005, from September 2009*

About this guide

This document has been written for busy school staff who want to explore their school's position and produce a single equality policy. The policy should clearly articulate what the school is already doing and how it plans to address its statutory responsibilities by developing more inclusive provision for everyone. In this sense the policy is seen as a plan for change and should be clearly linked to the School Development Plan. This should outline the school's vision, aims and action plans on a range of priorities seen through the lens of equality. It should be relevant to the entire organisation and apply to the school's three main functions: as an employer, as a service provider and as a community resource.

This document does not offer guidance on revising your school's race/ethnicity, disability and gender equality schemes. Under existing legislation these need to remain in place and provide details of how the principles and values put forward in the policy will be implemented. Please see box opposite for changes anticipated in the Equality Act 2010.

This document is organised in three main sections:

- The first section presents the background to this guide and the context in which it has been written.
- The second section presents the legal duties. It addresses each of the current duties in turn, outlining what the statutory requirements are, which aspects of school life are most relevant, why these issues are important and where additional information may be found. Under each heading *a concise summary is offered in italics* which is then followed by a more detailed response, *for ease of reference* and greater depth of engagement with the issues.
- The third section sets the practical framework for writing and reviewing your school's single equality policy. In compiling this guide, CSIE has drawn on a number of existing examples of good practice, as well as the Centre's own, earlier publication "*Developing an inclusive policy for your school; a CSIE guide*".

This guide aims to provide food for thought and material for discussion within your school community, to help with the ongoing review of your school's position on equality issues. It is hoped that the content, style and practical suggestions will help you explore the fundamental principles upon which your school's policies are based. In this way, over and above being a resource to help you write a policy, this guide can support your continued engagement with issues of equality from a variety of perspectives.

Note in anticipation of Equality Act 2010

This guide refers to legislation in force at the time of going to print (March 2010). The Equality Bill is currently going through Parliament and is expected to become the new Equality Act later this year and to come into force in 2011. It aims to strengthen equality rights for a wider range of people and to simplify existing discrimination law by combining 9 big equality laws and around 100 smaller laws into one piece of legislation. The Equality Bill proposes a new single equality duty, intended to combine and strengthen the existing equality duties and to extend legal protection to other groups of people. It is anticipated that as well as stipulating equality on the grounds of ethnicity, disability and gender, it will also specify protected characteristics on the grounds of: age; sexual identity (sexual orientation and gender reassignment); pregnancy & maternity; and religion or belief. A socio-economic duty is also being proposed and the two duties are expected to reinforce and support each other. The new legislation is expected to signal a move away from the requirement to produce self-standing Equality Schemes. Instead, it is expected to stipulate that public bodies must collect relevant evidence, involving key stakeholders in the process, and engage in a rigorous and comprehensive process to formulate Equality Objectives as part of their ongoing business plan; for schools, this would be the School Development Plan. Equality objectives will need to be formulated across all protected characteristics as appropriate and demonstrate due regard to National Equality Priorities put forward, and regularly reviewed, by relevant government Departments; for schools, this would be the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Details of the new general duties will be confirmed when this legislation is passed; details of specific duties for schools will be formulated at a later date. This guide will be revised when all details of the new legislation have been confirmed (probably in 2011).

Inclusive values at the heart of fulfilling the legal duties

Can everyone in a school community share one set of values? Can all pupils, their families and all staff in a school have the same views on all equality issues? Moreover, can everyone in a school, whether there daily or occasionally, consistently act in ways that uphold the school's declared values?

This document aims to do more than help schools fulfil their statutory duties. It invites school staff and governors to explore their personal stance on a range of equality issues, consult with others within and beyond the school community and develop a policy that a) articulates the school's commitment to equality and b) helps shape more inclusive provision by actively seeking equality for all, particularly those at risk of discrimination.

One advantage of having discrete equality policies focusing on different groups of people is that each policy addresses specific issues of discrimination for that particular group. A clear disadvantage, however, is that this makes it harder to see the essential common core: that it is unethical to discriminate against anyone on the assumption that they should not be valued as highly as others. Such assumptions may be hidden or unacknowledged, but to believe that any group of human beings may be superior to others gives rise to perceptions of hierarchy which continuously permeate our interactions and may shape people's sense of identity. CSIE's activities are firmly rooted in a rights-based standpoint which grants equal value to everyone, earned by virtue of being human; in this sense personal possessions, alleged status or perceived abilities have no part in determining personal worth. We invite others to

join us on this journey of pursuing equality for all, challenging the assumptions behind the perceived privilege of some over others and, therefore, seeking to develop more inclusive schools.

"Inclusion" has become a fashionable word, which seems to mean different things to different people. Although the word is now used broadly across policy fields, it first appeared as an educational term in the mid 1990s when it superseded the word "integration", referring to education in mainstream schools for disabled children or those said to have special educational needs and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties.⁵ The meaning of the word "inclusion" has expanded over time and now it refers to welcoming and upholding the rights of all members – existing or potential – of a particular community.

The CSIE publication *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*⁶ is a set of materials to support inclusive school development through a self-review of the school's cultures, policies and practices. The Index materials define inclusion in education as, among other things, the restructuring of the cultures, policies and practices in mainstream schools, so they can be welcoming and responsive to the full diversity of people in their locality. Already translated into more than 30 languages, it is very popular with schools throughout the world and is available from www.csie.org.uk/publications. As a resource that helps schools put inclusive values into action, it can be a very useful companion to this guide.

⁵ Thomas, G. and Vaughan, M. (2004) *Inclusive Education: readings and reflections*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

⁶ Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE.



The legal duties: Race/ethnicity⁷ equality

“Working-class and minority families invest much in education and have been short-changed for far too long.”

Maud Blair and Mike Cole, in “Racism and Education: The imperial legacy”

What are the legal duties?

The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended in 2000, places a statutory general duty on public authorities, including schools, to promote race equality. The general duty is obligatory and states that public authorities must have ‘due regard to the need’ to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity between people of different racial groups and
- promote good relations between people from different racial groups

Schools must also meet a set of specific duties. They must:

- prepare and maintain a Race Equality Policy, with an action plan
- involve appropriate and diverse stakeholders in developing the policy
- assess the impact of all their policies on pupils, staff and parents of different racial groups
- monitor, by reference to their impact on such pupils, staff and parents, the operation of such policies
- implement the actions set out in the policy within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so
- take reasonable steps to report on progress annually and review and revise the scheme at least every three years

The Human Rights Act 1998 established an obligation on schools not to discriminate on grounds of religion. The Employment Equality (religion or belief) Regulations 2003 made it unlawful for employers to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of religion or belief. Part 2 of the Equality Act 2006 placed a new obligation on schools not to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief (including lack of religion or belief).

There is no requirement for schools to formulate new policies or action plans in response to this additional legislation, but schools are expected to be aware of their obligations and duties. They are also expected to ensure that their practice complies with these legal requirements and that relevant equality policies reflect this. When the Equality Act 2006 came into force, the Department for Education and Skills published guidance for schools detailing exceptions for schools of a religious character, for the content of the curriculum and for collective worship, as well as making particular reference to issues of exclusion and school uniform.⁸

The UK has ratified (1969) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, an international human rights treaty. Article 5 asserts the right to education without discrimination.

The UK has also ratified (1991) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the main international treaty on children’s rights. Article 2 asserts the right to enjoyment of all rights without discrimination. Articles 28 & 29 detail the right to education for all children.

When developing an ethnicity equality policy, whether on its own or as part of a single equality policy, it is important to remember that the document is not an end in itself, but a means of articulating the school’s commitment to equality in order to plan action towards school improvement.

⁷ The term “race” appears in legislation, as for example in the terms *race equality*, *race relations* and *racial group*. We have, here, followed the example set by the DCSF in its *Equality Impact Assessment (EQUIA) Workbook* which proposes alternative terminology justified as follows: “There is no scientific basis for dividing the human species into races, however. The term *ethnicity*, which implies cultural, linguistic and religious aspects of identity as well as (sometimes but not always) visible differences, more accurately reflects the intentions in race relations legislation.” (*EQUIA Workbook*, p. 36)

⁸ DfES (2006) *The Equality Act 2006 Part 2: Discrimination on Grounds of Religion or Belief: Guidance for Schools*.



Action planned should: a) present specific, measurable and realistic targets for meeting the general and specific duties and b) include intended outcomes and lines of accountability set out on a clear timescale. CSIE recommends that planned action is reflected in the school development plan; this is consistent with the requirement for ethnicity equality schemes to be reviewed at least once a year and have a lifetime of three years.

What should schools do?

Schools should, in collaboration with key stakeholders, explore every aspect of school life, highlight possible and actual inequalities, investigate why they take place and remove any unfairness or disadvantage to people of different ethnic backgrounds. Schools must publish a policy and a scheme with an action plan detailing how they intend to meet the ethnicity equality duty.

Aspects of school life that can be examined for their relevance to ethnicity equality include:

- The school's mission statement and core values
- Ethnicity equality priorities in the school development plan
- Significance of ethnicity equality evident in all school policies, particularly behaviour, collective worship, target setting, teaching & learning and performance management policies
- Significance of ethnicity equality reflected in language and images of school prospectus and/or website
- Equality values reflected in language of all school policies, SEF and other school documents
- Equality values reflected in language and behaviour evident every day in school
- Tolerance levels of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice
- Processes for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard

- Curriculum themes and content
- Respect for each other consistently evident and promoted in daily school life, including curriculum areas such as RE, PSHE and citizenship
- Educational visits and other school trips
- Positive images of ethnic diversity in learning resources and displays
- History of ethnicity inequality and oppression evident in curriculum
- Learning about human rights evident in curriculum
- School links and partnerships
- Processes for monitoring and supporting the learning for all pupils
- Processes for monitoring and supporting inclusion / avoiding exclusion for all pupils
- Events or activities set up to celebrate diversity
- Issues of interpretation and translation for those who are not fluent in English
- Policy on school uniform, particularly allowances for expression of cultural identity
- Extended school partnerships and participation in activities
- Pupil participation in all aspects of school life
- Partnership and collaboration with parents with regard to their child's development
- Parental participation and engagement in other aspects of school life
- Ethnic diversity in workforce and governing body
- Monitoring all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues and complaints
- Monitoring allocation of responsibilities, professional development and progression of all staff
- Prominence of ethnicity equality in staff training and professional development
- Level of engagement of all members of the school community in exploring the above issues and developing the policy

Why is ethnicity equality important?

We all know not to judge a book by its cover, yet prejudice and stereotypical thinking have plagued UK society for hundreds of years. Inequality and discrimination on grounds of ethnicity or religion have intensified in recent years. This creates an urgent need to listen to the voices of others, challenge prejudice and promote understanding of today's communities in the context of yesterday's stories.

In the wake of major incidents such as 9/11 or 7/7, polarisation has intensified and led to further direct attacks on people, young or old. Hate crime is widespread and is often triggered by details that, like skin colour, are both insignificant and entirely irrelevant to people's self worth. In some schools cultural stereotyping and prejudice-related bullying are commonplace. Individual incidents, as well as the longevity of their occurrence, are causes for significant concern. A worrying connection between difference and inequality persists, while assumed power relations give rise to notions of relative status or hierarchies that have no moral justification. Categorizing people according to skin colour, cultural or ethnic background often creates dichotomies which are not helpful in understanding people and their lived experience.

Schools are exceptionally well placed to foster understanding among children and young people and support the development of more inclusive cultures within and beyond the school. Staff can help young people understand today's diversity in its historical context and promote positive relationships by exposing inequalities and putting forward strategies to overcome them. Above all, they have a remit to challenge prejudice and stereotypical thinking and encourage everyone to see racism as utterly unacceptable in all areas of public and private life.

In addition to the above, well documented inequalities that are related to ethnicity continue to persist in schools. Levels of attainment and rates of exclusion are just two of the areas where there are consistent differences between ethnic groups. A single equality policy can help address significant inequalities in ways that separate policies cannot, for example by recognizing that a range of equality issues are simultaneously at play. Educational outcomes for boys of particular ethnic groups, for example, are known to have been consistently and significantly lower than average.

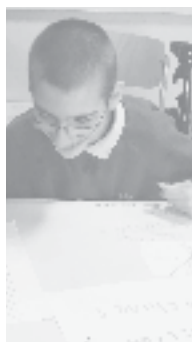
Where can I find more information?

In print:

- Asare, Y. (2009) *Them and Us: Race Equality Interventions in Predominantly White Schools*. London: Runnymede Trust
- Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE
- Blair, M. and Cole, M. (2000) *Racism and education: the imperial legacy*. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer
- Commission for Racial Equality (2005) *Race equality good relations guide*
- DCLG (2008) *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey*. London: Communities and Local Government Publications
- DCLG (2010) *Tackling race inequality; A statement on race*. London: Communities and Local Government Publications
- DfES (2002) *Removing the Barriers: Raising Achievement Levels for Minority Ethnic Pupils – Exploring Good Practice*. DfES Publications
- DfES (2006) *The Equality Act 2006 Part 2: Discrimination on Grounds of Religion or Belief: Guidance for Schools*
- Garner, S. et al (2009) *Sources of resentment and perceptions of ethnic minorities among poor white people in England Report compiled for the National Community Forum*. London: Communities and Local Government Publications
- HM Government (2007) *PSA Delivery Agreement 15: Address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief*
- Sughra, A. (2009) *Seen and Not Heard: voices of young British Muslims*. Leicester: Policy Research Centre
- Virdee, S. and Cole, M. (2000) *'Race', racism and resistance*. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer

On the web:

- www.csie.org.uk/inclusion/education-racial.shtml CSIE web pages on ethnicity equality
- www.emas4success.org Ethnic Minority Achievement Service of the South Gloucestershire Consortium
- www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/what-are-the-public-sector-duties/race-equality-duty/ EHRC web pages on ethnicity equality
- www.humanismforschools.org.uk Resources for schools on a non-religious approach to life
- www.qcda.gov.uk/6753.aspx Respect For All: QCDA web pages offering information and resources for teachers who value diversity and want to challenge racism through the curriculum
- www.runnymedetrust.org Online resource towards a successful multi-ethnic Britain
- www.skindeep.org.uk Online resource to address racist bullying and cultural stereotyping in schools
- www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/equality/race Teachernet's web pages on ethnicity equality
- www.theiceproject.com The Islam and Citizenship Education Project



The legal duties: Disability equality

“Our fight for the inclusion of all children, however ‘severely’ disabled, in one, mainstream, education system, will not make sense unless the difference between the ‘social’ and the ‘medical’ or individual model of disability is understood.”

Richard Rieser, International equality trainer, consultant and teacher

What are the legal duties?

Since September 2002, when the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) (2001)* came into force, it has been unlawful for any school to discriminate against disabled pupils in:

- admissions
- education and associated services
- exclusions

The *Disability Discrimination Act 2005* places a duty on all public bodies, including schools, to promote disability equality.

The Act renders it unlawful for schools to treat a disabled pupil, actual or potential, less favourably than another for a reason related to their disability, without attempting to make “reasonable adjustments” to avoid placing disabled pupils at a disadvantage.

The Disability Equality Duty, which came into force in December 2006, requires schools to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people

If you were asked to imagine the people that make up a class, or a school, or society, would the picture in your mind include disabled people? Look again at the heading at the top of this page. Did you spot the typo or did you see what you expected to see? As you walk through your own life, you may want to consider the ‘l’ that might be missing from what you choose to see. Disabled people tell us they often feel invisible.

- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take steps to take account of disabled people’s impairments, even if this requires more favourable treatment

To assist in meeting the Disability Equality Duty, schools are also covered by specific duties, which means they must:

- publish a disability equality scheme which includes an action plan (“*produce and publish a disability equality scheme (DES) demonstrating how they intend to fulfil their general and specific duties*”)
- involve disabled people in producing the scheme and action plan
- demonstrate they have taken the actions in the scheme and achieved appropriate outcomes
- report on progress
- review and revise the scheme at least every three years

The UK has ratified⁹ (2009) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, an international human rights treaty. Article 24 asserts the right of all disabled young people to an “inclusive education system at all levels”.

The UK has also ratified (1991) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the main international treaty on children’s rights. Article 2 asserts the right to enjoyment of all rights without discrimination. Article 23 makes special provision for disabled children, while Articles 28 & 29 detail the right to education for all children.

⁹ Although the UK government has ratified this Convention, it has placed reservations on Article 12 (Equal recognition before the law), Article 18 (Liberty of movement and nationality), Article 27 (Work and Employment) as well as a reservation and an interpretive declaration on Article 24 (Education). With regard to education, the government has expressed its intention to sustain the current practice of placing some disabled children and young people in segregated provision, as well as its commitment to developing more inclusive provision for all children and young people in their local neighbourhood school.

Who is disabled and what is it that disables him or her?

In line with earlier legislation, the Disability Discrimination Act defines a disabled person as one who “has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities” and provides clarifications and exclusions to this definition.

CSIE understands that the language we use shapes our thinking, and vice versa, so a word about terminology is called for. A major shift in how people understand disability has gathered momentum in recent years. Disabled adults have called for an examination of common assumptions and a clarification of what is meant by ‘impairment’ and what by ‘disability’. A conventional way of thinking (the view that people are disabled by physical or mental impairments and, consequently, need management or treatment) has become known as the medical model of disability.

An alternative, known as the social model of disability, is increasingly being understood and becoming more widely accepted. According to this, a person who has an impairment (a long term loss of physical or mental function) may become disabled if reasonable adjustments are not provided in relation to that impairment. In other words, people are not disabled by the impairment itself but by society’s failure to make adjustments or remove barriers. ‘Disability’, in this sense, is understood as an experience. For this reason, in the UK, the term *disabled people* is preferred to the term *people with disabilities*. The two models are clearly described by Richard Rieser in ‘Disability Discrimination, the Final Frontier’.¹⁰

The difference between whether a child ‘has’ or ‘experiences’ difficulties is similar to whether a child ‘brings’ or ‘finds’ difficulties at school. To many this might seem like a futile word game; to others such differences are of paramount importance, not least because they can have a strong impact on children’s sense of identity.

What should schools do?

Schools should, in collaboration with key stakeholders, including disabled people, explore every aspect of school life, highlight possible and actual inequalities, investigate why they take place and remove any institutional barriers to learning and participation for disabled young people and disabled adults.

Schools must publish a policy and a scheme with an action plan detailing how they intend to meet the disability equality duty.

When developing a disability equality policy, whether on its own or as part of a single equality policy, it is important to remember that the document is not an end in itself, but a means of articulating the school’s commitment to equality in order to plan action towards school improvement. Action planned should:

- present specific, measurable and realistic targets for meeting the general and specific duties and
- include intended outcomes and lines of accountability

set out on a clear timescale. Schools must involve disabled people in the development of their scheme, indicate how disabled people have contributed to this, report on their disability equality scheme annually and implement the actions in their scheme within three years. CSIE recommends that planned action is reflected the school development plan; this is consistent with the requirement for disability equality schemes to be regularly reviewed and revised every three years.

Aspects of school life that can be examined for their relevance to disability equality include:

- The school’s mission statement and core values
- Disability equality priorities in the school development plan
- Significance of disability equality evident in all school policies, particularly admissions, attendance, target setting, teaching & learning and performance management policies
- Significance of disability equality reflected in language and images of school prospectus and/or website
- Equality values reflected in language of all school policies, SEF and other school documents
- Engagement with social model of disability (see above)

¹⁰ In Cole (ed) (2003) *Education, Equality and Human Rights*, London: Routledge Falmer.

- Evidence of reasonable adjustments considered in order to include all young people living within the school's locality
- Equality values reflected in language and behaviour evident every day in school
- Tolerance levels of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice
- Processes for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard
- Respect for each other consistently evident and promoted in daily school life, including curriculum areas such as RE, PSHE and citizenship
- Curriculum themes and content
- Positive images of disability in learning resources and displays
- History of disability inequality and oppression evident in curriculum
- Learning about human rights evident in curriculum
- Processes for monitoring and supporting the learning for all pupils and formulating expectations
- Processes for differentiation and making all learning opportunities meaningful and relevant to all pupils
- Events or activities set up to raise awareness of disability equality
- Extended school partnerships; access and participation in activities
- Pupil participation in all aspects of school life
- Partnership and collaboration with parents with regard to their child's development
- Parental participation and engagement in other aspects of school life
- Welcoming disabled adults as members of staff and/or governing body
- Monitoring all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues and complaints
- Monitoring allocation of responsibilities, professional development and progression of all staff
- Prominence of disability equality in staff training and professional development
- Level of engagement of all members of the school community in exploring the above issues and developing the policy

Why is disability equality important?

Segregating institutions were set up at a time when disabled people were seen as defective and/or objects of pity that had no place in mainstream society. Such thinking is now outdated and disabled young people have their entitlement to mainstream schooling enshrined in law. Offering the entitlement, however, without developing capacity in mainstream, is like issuing a ticket and keeping the door locked.

Current ideas about schooling were established over 100 years ago, at a time when many children with unusual bodies or minds were not expected to ever have a place in mainstream society. Although cultural norms have significantly shifted in recent years and disabled people are being increasingly valued as members of mainstream society, our education system has yet to embrace these changing attitudes. In assessing some children's "needs", many professionals continue to focus on physical, sensory or mental impairments and place children in educational institutions alongside others with similar impairments. No adult would choose their workplace by these criteria. Disabled adults have repeatedly said that segregated education leads to segregated and unfulfilled adult lives. The imperative for mainstream provision for all is not yet widely understood; it involves a re-examination of conventional ways of seeing disability and a challenge to the orthodoxy of how mainstream schools are organised and managed.

In 2008 MENCAP published a report entitled "Just not a priority: schools and disability equality". The report demonstrated that, three years after the introduction of the disability equality duty, little had changed in mainstream provision for disabled children and young people. At a time when mainstream schools are increasingly being expected to provide personalised learning, there is no reason why tailor-made provision has to take place in separate institutions. Mainstream provision can be developed to cater for all learners; indeed in many places it has been. What is stopping it from developing on a larger scale is, we believe, the anachronistic practice of routinely excluding disabled learners from the mainstream and the widely held belief that this is acceptable. This creates a vicious circle whereby inclusive provision is not developed, because it has never been developed before.

Where can I find more information?

In print:

Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE

DfES and DRC (2006) *Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in schools and early years settings*. Nottingham: DfES Publications

DCSF (2008) *Secretary of State report on progress towards disability equality across the children's and education sector*. Nottingham: DCSF

DfES and DRC (2006) *Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in schools and early years settings*. Nottingham: DfES Publications

Jordan, L. and Goodey, C. (2002) *Human rights and school change: the Newham story*. Bristol: CSIE

HM Government (2007) *PSA Delivery Agreement 15: Address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief*

HM Treasury and DfES (2007) *Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families*

Lewis, A. et al (2007) *My school, my family, my life: telling it like it is*. London: Disability Rights Commission

Rieser, R. (2000a). Disability Discrimination, the Final Frontier; disablement, history and liberation. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer

Rieser, R. (2000b). Special Educational Needs or Inclusive Education; The challenge of disability discrimination in schooling. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer

Rieser, R. (2003) *Disabling Imagery? A teaching guide to disability and moving image media*. London: Disability Equality Education

Rieser, R. and Mason, M (1992) *Disability equality in the classroom: a human rights issue* London: Disability Equality in Education

Rustemier, S. (2002) *Social and educational justice: the human rights framework for inclusion*. Bristol: CSIE

Stobbs, P. and Rieser, R. (2002) *Making it work: Removing Disability Discrimination – Are you ready?* London: National Children's Bureau

On the web:

www.bfi.org.uk/education/teaching/disability A teaching guide to disability and moving image media

www.csie.org.uk/inclusion/education-disability.shtml CSIE web pages on disability equality

www.csie.org.uk/inclusion/disabled-children.shtml CSIE web pages on disabled children's right to a mainstream education

www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/what-are-the-public-sector-duties/disability-equality-duty EHRC web pages on the disability equality duty

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/equality/Disability Teachernet's web pages on disability equality

www.worldofinclusion.com The website of Richard Rieser Disability Equality; contains a primary and secondary guide to the disability equality duty and many examples of how to raise disability in the curriculum.

www.worldofinclusion.com/res/duty/Primary_coursebook.doc

www.worldofinclusion.com/res/duty/Secondary_coursebook.doc

www.worldofinclusion.com/qcda.htm



The legal duties: Gender equality

There is still a need for “the elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education.”

United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

What are the legal duties?

The Equality Act 2006 amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and introduced the Gender Equality Duty, which came into force on 6 April 2007. This requires public bodies, including schools, to:

- promote gender equality
- eliminate sex discrimination

Unlike the disability and race equality duties, which have different requirements for different sectors, the gender equality duty requires all public authorities, including schools, to comply with the same specific duties.

To meet the specific duties, schools should:

- prepare and publish a gender equality scheme, with an action plan
- involve stakeholders in developing the scheme
- gather and use information on how the school’s policies and practices affect gender equality in the workplace and in the delivery of its services
- consider the need to have objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- assess the impact of the school’s current and future policies and practices on gender equality
- implement the actions set out in the scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so
- report on progress annually and review and revise the scheme at least every three years

The Human Rights Act 1998 established an obligation on public bodies, including schools, not to discriminate on grounds of gender. The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 made it unlawful for employers to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of gender reassignment. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 made it unlawful for employers to discriminate against anyone on

the grounds of sexual orientation. The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 made it unlawful for providers of goods and services to discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation.

There is no requirement for schools to formulate new policies or action plans in response to this additional legislation, but schools are expected to be aware of their obligations and duties. They are also expected to ensure that their practice complies with these legal requirements and that relevant equality policies reflect this.

The UK has ratified (1986) the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, an international human rights treaty. Article 10 recognises the right to education without discrimination; article 14 refers to education for women living in rural areas.

The UK has also ratified (1991) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the main international treaty on children’s rights. Article 2 asserts the right to enjoyment of all rights without discrimination. Articles 28 & 29 detail the right to education for all children.

When developing a gender equality policy, whether on its own or as part of a single equality policy, it is important to remember that the document is not an end in itself, but a means of articulating the school’s commitment to equality in order to plan action towards school improvement. Action planned should:

- a) present specific, measurable and realistic targets for meeting the general and specific duties and
- b) include intended outcomes and lines of accountability set out on a clear timescale. CSIE recommends that planned action is reflected in the school development plan; this is consistent with the requirement for gender equality schemes to be reviewed at least once a year and have a lifetime of three years.

What should schools do?

Schools should, in collaboration with key stakeholders, explore every aspect of school life, highlight possible and actual inequalities, investigate why they take place and remove any gender bias. Schools must publish a policy and a scheme with an action plan detailing how they intend to meet the gender equality duty.

Aspects of school life that can be examined for their relevance to gender equality include:

- The school's mission statement and core values
- Gender equality priorities in the school development plan
- Significance of gender equality evident in all school policies, particularly admissions, attendance, target setting, teaching & learning and performance management policies
- Significance of gender equality reflected in language and images of school prospectus and/or website
- Equality values reflected in language of all school policies, SEF and other school documents
- Equality values reflected in language and behaviour evident every day in school
- Tolerance levels of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice
- Processes for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard
- Respect for each other consistently evident and promoted in daily school life, including curriculum areas such as RE, PSHE and citizenship
- Curriculum themes and content
- Positive images of gender equality in learning resources and displays
- History of gender inequality and oppression evident in curriculum
- Learning about human rights evident in curriculum

- Processes for monitoring and supporting the learning for all pupils and formulating expectations
- Events or activities set up to raise awareness of gender equality
- Extended school partnerships and participation in activities
- Pupil participation in all aspects of school life (e.g. school council, sport and other extra-curricular choices, uptake of GCSE or A-level subjects)
- Partnership and collaboration with parents with regard to their child's development
- Parental participation and engagement in other aspects of school life
- Gender balance in the workforce and governing body
- Monitoring all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues and complaints
- Monitoring allocation of responsibilities, professional development and progression of male, female or transgender members of staff
- Prominence of gender equality in staff training and professional development
- Level of engagement of all members of the school community in exploring the above issues and developing the policy





Why is gender equality important?

There are persistent differences between boys' and girls' experiences and choices in education, while gender inequalities in the workforce are still being perpetuated. Homophobic bullying is prevalent in many schools and transgender people often remain invisible.

In 2007 the DfES published “*Gender and education: the evidence on pupils in England*”, a topic paper presenting statistics on the participation and attainment of boys and girls from reception to sixth form. Key findings are listed here. Boys account for 80 percent of permanent exclusions and three quarters of fixed term exclusions. Girls are more likely than boys to have been the victim of psychological bullying while boys are more likely than girls to have been the victim of physical bullying. Attainment through the education system appears to vary by gender and to follow a consistent pattern; the gender gap is reported to be wide in English and narrower in maths with, on average, girls performing better than boys. At GCSE level girls tend to do better on most subjects, while there are important gender differences in subject choices. Girls are more likely to stay on in full time education at age 16 (82% of girls and 72% of boys) and gender differences in subject choice become more accentuated post-16. The publication also highlights marked gender differences in the school workforce: in nursery and primary schools the majority of teachers are female (84%); in secondary the gender split is more even, 56% of teachers are female. Despite these figures, men are far more likely to be promoted to headship. While only 16% of nursery/primary teachers are male, 34% of head teachers are male.

Where can I find more information?

In print:

- Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE
- DCSF (2009) *Gender Issues in School – what works to improve achievement for boys and girls*. Nottingham: DCSF
- DfES (2007) *Gender and education: the evidence on pupils in England*. Nottingham: DfES Publications
- Ellis, V. and Forrest, S. (2000) *One of them or one of us? Sexuality, identity and equality*. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer
- Equal Opportunities Commission (2006) *Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice England and Wales*
- Equal Opportunities Commission (2007) *The gender equality duty and schools: guidance for public authorities in England*
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010) *Provision of goods, facilities and services to trans people: guidance for public authorities in meeting your equality duties and human rights obligations*. EHRC Publication
- Forrest, S. (2000) *Difficult loves: learning about sexuality and homophobia in schools*. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer
- HM Government (2007) *PSA Delivery Agreement 15: Address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief*
- Kelly, J. (2000) *Gender and equality: one hand tied behind us*. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer
- Martin, J. (2000) *Gender, education and the new millennium*. In Cole, M. (ed.), *Education, Equality and Human Rights; Issues of Gender, 'Race', Sexuality, Special Needs and Social Class*. London: RoutledgeFalmer

On the web:

- www.csie.org.uk/inclusion/gender-discrimination.shtml CSIE web pages on gender equality
- www.eachaction.org.uk Educational Action Challenging Homophobia
- www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-duties/what-are-the-public-sector-duties/gender-equality-duty EHRC web pages on the gender equality duty
- www.gires.org.uk Gender Identity Research and Education Society
- www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk Online resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans history month (February of each year)
- www.nooutsiders.sunderland.ac.uk No outsiders: project researching approaches to sexualities equality in primary schools
- www.schools-out.org.uk Schools Out – working towards equality in education for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people since 1974
- www.stonewall.org.uk Lesbian, gay and bisexual charity
- www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/equality/genderequalityduty Teachernet's web pages on the gender equality duty

Community cohesion

“Chronic disadvantage and inequality persist. Half of disabled people are out of work. A Bangladeshi woman is six times as likely to be unemployed as a white woman. A child’s postcode at birth is a reasonable predictor for their lot in life as an adult. Our choices and chances in life are still, to a great extent, determined by our origins.”

Equality and Human Rights Commission



What is the legal duty?

Schools have a general duty to promote community cohesion.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 established a new duty for all maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion, which came into effect on 1 September 2007. The Act also requires Ofsted to consider and report on the contribution that schools make to community cohesion, which has been happening since September 2008.

What does community cohesion mean?

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) defines¹¹ community cohesion as working towards a society in which:

- there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities
- the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued
- similar life opportunities are available to all
- strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community

The DCSF further identifies¹² four dimensions of a community, from a school’s perspective:

- The school community – the children and young people it serves, their parents, carers and families, the school’s staff and governing body, and community users of the school’s facilities and services.
- The community within which the school is located – the school in its geographical community and the people who live or work in that area. This applies not just to the immediate neighbourhood but also to the city or local authority area within which a school is located.
- The national community – all schools are by definition part of this community.
- The global community – formed by EU and international links.

¹¹ DCSF (2007) *Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion*. Nottingham: DCSF

¹² Ibid

Although the duty to promote community cohesion is relatively new, the issues it addresses are far from new. Respecting and valuing every member of the school community, as well as striving to create equal opportunities for all, have been at the core of educational provision for many years and form an integral part of the Every Child Matters agenda.

What should schools do?

Schools should identify which aspects of school life already contribute to community cohesion and what progress can be made; set targets for promoting community cohesion, regularly evaluate their effectiveness against these and ensure that the school's SEF¹³ accurately reflects their work. There is no statutory requirement for schools to develop a separate action plan for promoting community cohesion.

Aspects of school life that can be examined for their potential impact on community cohesion include:

- The school's mission statement and core values
- Evidence of negotiations and attempts to include all young people living within the school's locality
- Community cohesion priorities evident in the school development plan
- Significance of community cohesion evident in all school policies, particularly admissions, attendance, lettings and charging policies
- Significance of community cohesion reflected in language and images of school prospectus and/or website
- Equality values reflected in language of all school policies, SEF and other school documents
- Equality values reflected in language and behaviour evident every day in school
- Tolerance levels of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Processes for challenging inappropriate language or behaviour and/or prejudice
- Processes for recording and reporting incidents of inappropriate language or behaviour
- Opportunities for different viewpoints to be expressed and voices to be heard
- Respect for each other consistently evident and promoted in daily school life, including curriculum areas such as RE, PSHE and citizenship
- Learning about human rights evident in curriculum
- Curriculum themes and content
- Positive images of diversity in learning resources and displays
- Acknowledgment and/or celebration of a range of religious or cultural events
- Processes for monitoring and supporting the learning for all pupils and formulating expectations
- Events or activities set up to celebrate diversity
- Events or activities set up to raise awareness of community cohesion
- Extended school partnerships and activities
- Links or partnerships with the local authority and with other schools locally, nationally and internationally
- Availability of school facilities to members of the local community
- Issues of interpretation and translation for those who are not fluent in English
- The role of the school as a focal point in the local community
- Pupil participation in all aspects of school life
- Partnership and collaboration with parents with regard to their child's development
- Parental participation and engagement in other aspects of school life
- Diversity in the workforce and governing body, in relation to diversity in local area
- Monitoring all aspects of employment, including recruitment, disciplinary issues and complaints
- Monitoring allocation of responsibilities, professional development and progression of male and female members of staff
- Prominence of community cohesion in staff training and professional development
- Level of engagement of all members of the school community in exploring the above issues and developing the policy

¹³ Self Evaluation Framework



The cohesiveness of the school community itself is likely to have a strong bearing on how individuals, be they adults or young people, come to understand community cohesion and its significance in everyone's life.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has produced guidance on implementing the duty, offering information on community cohesion and how it relates to what schools do. The guidance suggests that schools' contribution to community cohesion can be grouped under three headings:

- Teaching, learning and curriculum
- Equity and excellence
- Engagement and extended services

Why is community cohesion important?

Our society has been rapidly changing and demographic changes have given rise to significant tensions at local, national and international level. As a focal point of local communities, schools are exceptionally well placed to foster respect for diversity and for individuals of different backgrounds.

Trevor Phillips, chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, has famously said¹⁴ that we are “sleepwalking our way to segregation”. The duty to promote community cohesion provides schools with a valuable opportunity to establish good community relations and equip today's children for tomorrow's life as adults in a diverse and inclusive society. Schools can, through their work towards promoting community cohesion, act to challenge discrimination and inequality, foster mutual respect, treat diversity as a rich learning resource and remove barriers to learning and participation for all children and young people.

In 2008 the government launched *The Prevent Strategy*, aiming to protect local communities by stopping people from carrying out terrorist activities or supporting violent extremism, as part of its larger *Contest* strategy to guard against terrorism. In some areas this has interfered with the community cohesion agenda, through a perception that it targets the whole Muslim community as ‘potential terrorists’. This seems to overlook the fact that the vast majority of Muslims are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of extreme violence and that seeing every Muslim as a potential terrorist is similar to seeing every young man as a potential hooligan. Suspicion and mistrust clearly don't sit comfortably alongside valuing diversity and building strong and positive relationships.

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion published its final report, “*Our shared future*”, at the time when the duty to promote community cohesion was being introduced. In anticipation of how schools might perceive this duty, the report states:

“The current pressure on standards means that the new duty may seem to some an additional burden – but our local visits suggest that instead it is an absolutely critical part of engaging young people in key issues around their responsibilities to others from an early age.”

¹⁴ In September 2005, speaking of the July bombings in London, Trevor Phillips (then Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality) took up the theme of Martin Luther King's “I have a dream” speech and said that it was “time to wake up” to the reality in our country. He added: “We are sleepwalking our way to segregation. We are becoming strangers to each other and we are leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream.”

Where can I find more information?

In print:

Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE

Cantle, T. (2001) *Community Cohesion: a report of the independent review team* London: Home Office

Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007) *Our shared future*. Wetherby: Commission on Integration and Cohesion Publication

DCLG (2007) *Building cohesive communities: the crucial role of the new local performance framework*. Wetherby: Communities and Local Government Publications

DCLG (2008) *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey*. London: Communities and Local Government Publications

DCLG (2009) *Guidance for local authorities on how to mainstream community cohesion into other services*. London: Communities and Local Government Publications

DCSF (2007) *Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion*. Nottingham: DCSF

DCSF (2008) *The Inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children and Young People*. Nottingham: DCSF

DfES (2007) *Curriculum Review: Diversity and Citizenship (the Ajegbo Report)* Nottingham: DfES

HM Government (2007) *PSA Delivery Agreement 21: Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities*

Johnson, N. and Tatam, J. (2009) *Good relations: a conceptual analysis*. Equality and Human Rights Research Report 42. Manchester: EHRC

Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (2010) *Community cohesion in action: A curriculum planning guide for schools*. Coventry: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Richardson, R. (2009) *Holding Together – equalities, difference and cohesion; guidance for school improvement planning*. Derbyshire City Council and Trentham Books

On the web:

www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/home Institute of Community Cohesion – provides information and a comprehensive list of publications and other resources, including *Community Cohesion: useful links for schools*

www.ofsted.gov.uk Ofsted website; useful links include guidance for inspectors on reporting on community cohesion

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/Communitycohesion Teachernet's web pages on community cohesion



Getting started

“Amalgamating policies that are in place is a process rather than a paperwork exercise.”

Jeanette Scull, Inclusion and Equalities, Inclusive Education Team, London Borough of Newham

Developing your school's policy

Setting out to review and rewrite your school's equality policies is an important opportunity as well as a positive and visible step forward in the life of the school. Everyone involved in the school – governors, staff, parents, pupils – can be aware of it happening, know who has responsibility for the process and have an input. The CSIE publication *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*¹⁵ is a resource that can support schools in this process in greater detail than this guide.

Where you want to be

This means setting realistic targets and establishing a programme of action set within a clear timescale, to:

- challenge stereotypes and prejudice inside and outside the school
- acquire resources to guarantee effective implementation of the policy
- make the whole school environment welcoming and accessible to all
- spread expertise among all staff
- develop meaningful and relevant opportunities for all children to learn and to establish strong and positive relationships with their peers
- establish and maintain links between the school and its local and wider community

Where your school is now

Finding out where the school is now can be done through an equalities audit, which can be used to describe, record and understand the current situation in the school. It can reveal the school's strengths and weaknesses; who is included and excluded from the school's locality; the opportunities for development; and the threats to improvement. The audit can form the basis for defining where you want to be and what needs to be done in order to get there.

Build up a picture of where the school is now in terms of its current values, principles and policies, and how far these are being carried through. For example, ask questions such as:

- 1) Do we value all the young people in our school equally?
- 2) Are our educational aims the same for all young people?
- 3) How do we enable all young people to experience success?
- 4) Do we see parents as crucial to a child's education?
- 5) How do we involve parents in their child's education?
- 6) Has the school seriously addressed issues of ethnicity equality?
- 7) Has the school seriously addressed issues of disability equality?
- 8) Has the school seriously addressed issues of gender equality?
- 9) Has the school seriously addressed issues of community cohesion?
- 10) Has the school seriously addressed other equality issues, such as socio-economic disadvantage?
- 11) What does the school currently expect of itself in terms of creating positive learning environments and of reflecting the culture and characteristics of the local community?
- 12) What attitudinal or institutional barriers might be hindering the learning and participation of all children and young people who live in the school's locality, including those who are not currently on its roll?

¹⁵ Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE

What the governors can do

The governing body should already have appointed a governor with responsibility for inclusion. It should also consider giving a specific remit to one or two governors who would act as a focal point for debate about equality issues for every aspect of school life. They should keep in touch with the way the policy is being implemented; they should also support staff and parents who are specifically concerned and they should liaise with relevant outside agencies.

A member of your school's governing body could be invited to sit on governing body sub-committees of other schools to ensure that issues are raised and properly discussed. Schools could also set up joint working parties.

Consideration of equality issues should be embedded in the work of all sub-committees. An alternative might be to set up an equality sub-committee to encourage a shared responsibility among staff and governors. In either case, it is important to always remain alert to the danger of equality issues being separated from other school issues and from effective discussion by the whole governing body. Attention to all equality duties should run like a thread throughout all aspects of school life. It is up to each governing body to decide which procedure best suits its own members and how to avoid separating or isolating equality issues from the context in which they arise.

Setting up a working party

A first step to reviewing existing policies and drawing up a new one is to form a special working party with representatives from the governing body, teaching and non-teaching members of staff and parents. Your school might also decide to have Local Authority and pupil representation as well. The working party should have members with a diversity of experiences, interests and views on all equality issues. It is a legal requirement that you must involve appropriate and diverse stakeholders in the process of reviewing ethnicity equality and disabled people in the process of reviewing disability equality, as well as in deciding relevant action to be taken. The working party's remit will be to audit existing practice, develop a policy as plan for change and continually monitor and review the school's progress against the priorities set in the action plan.

Air any differences in the working party early rather than leave the raising or discussion of 'difficult' issues until late in the process. All views should be respected and vigorously debated. Recognize from the start that the process of reaching an agreed policy may not be

an easy one. Hold on to the fact that the rewards will be worth it – for each child's education in particular and for the school community as a whole.

Give your working party sufficient time and support to:

- i) consult with staff, parents and pupils
- ii) discuss a wide range of views
- iii) read up on particular issues
- iv) find out how other schools have developed their equality policy
- v) call in specific expertise from outside the school

Use the lists of issues detailed under each separate statutory duty above, as a guide to the kind of topics to be raised, the practice to aim for, and the targets to set.

Presence, participation and achievement for all

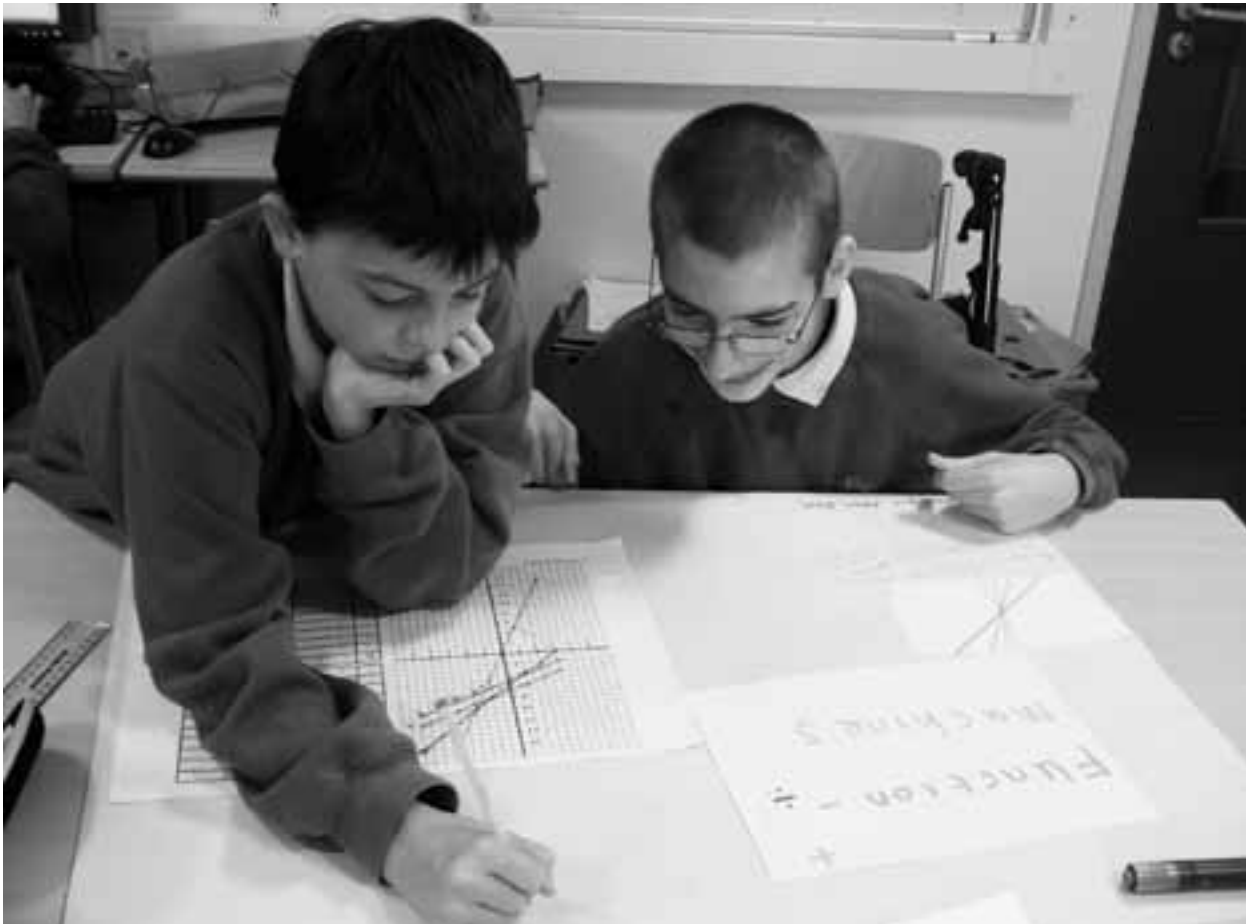
The audit should look specifically at issues of presence, participation and achievement with regard to:

- the full learning experience of all pupils, including educational visits and trips
- the full social experience of all members of the school community
- staff recruitment, development and progression
- links with families and the wider community
- services provided by or through the school
- issues of access to every part of the school building and grounds

Define what the school currently understands by presence, participation and achievement. Then ask two key questions about the school:

- Is every member of the school community likely to feel welcome, able to contribute and benefit from being in the school, and share a sense of belonging?
- Is the school a welcoming place for others called upon to contribute to school life or wanting to participate in other legitimate use of the premises?

Document where any problems exist, why they do, and how they might be resolved.



Language and terminology

Consider the reasons for embarking on the process of producing a new policy. Are you engaging with issues of equality as a matter of principle or simply as a technical exercise and/or a matter of perceived necessity? Developing a policy does not necessarily mean that you are developing equality. Make sure that your policy document clearly reflects the significance you attach to equality issues and to this process.

Think carefully about the language that you use, especially in describing children and the activities they do. Consider the extent to which the words you use reflect the level of respect you think is due to the people you refer to. Assess whether your thinking is more aligned with the social or the medical model (see p. 12) and make sure that the language you choose to use reflects this.

Developing your school's policy

Status and format of the policy

You may be tempted to base this new policy on a model policy or template available to you, tweaking it to personalize it to your school. There is nothing wrong with doing this, as long as you consider its content carefully. What is important is not the mere act of setting out your beliefs and intentions on paper, but your careful consideration of them and their relationship to what goes on in your school.

Your new policy will supersede the school's previously separate policies on ethnicity, disability and gender equality. In the interest of clarity, consider naming the policies that are being replaced. It is good practice to keep your school's equality policy simple and concise, providing a straightforward framework for promoting equality for all and fostering strong and positive relationships.

Under current legislation, a single equality policy must contain explicit reference to each of the relevant statutory equality duties. A constructive way to do this is to list the school's statutory duties and responsibilities in an Appendix, providing an extensive list clearly articulating who is covered by the policy. This will ensure that the school's commitment to equality is made absolutely explicit and that people at risk of marginalisation or discrimination are reassured by seeing themselves in this list. Having provided such a detailed list in the Appendix, the main text of the policy can simply refer to all members of the school community. The advantage of this is that the policy will not need to make continuous reference to particular minority groups. The very process of repeatedly identifying these groups can serve to constantly set people apart as 'other'. All means all. Continuous reference to all members of the school community can reinforce the awareness that those at risk of marginalisation or discrimination are actually valued members of the school community.

An alternative to listing the duties in an appendix may be to address each equality duty in a separate section or as a separate recurring theme throughout the policy. This, however, perpetuates the habit of grouping some people together and setting them apart from others. Even though this occurs in a printed document, such a sharp focus on differences between groups of people can have a strong impact on individuals' perceptions of one another and, in turn, on everyone's lived experience.

The policy must be supplemented by a clear action plan. A practical way to do this is to incorporate your equality action planning in the school development plan, ensuring there are clear targets for each equality duty spanning a 3-year action plan that is reviewed at least once a year. In formulating your targets for each equality duty, it is important to remember not only the members of your existing school community who are protected by equality legislation, but also young people in the local community who may have so far found it difficult to join your school.

Presenting your action plans within the relevant equality scheme(s) is a requirement under existing legislation. Keeping this separate from other aspects of school development, however, seems hard to justify and could detract from the significance of promoting equality for all and community cohesion. It would also be short-lived, as new legislation is expected to move away from the requirement to publish equality schemes.

What your policy must cover

You may choose any appropriate name for your new policy, for example: Single Equality Policy; Equality Policy; Equality and Diversity Policy; Equality, Diversity and Cohesion Policy; Community Cohesion and Equality Policy. Whatever its name, it should clearly state how your school is fulfilling its statutory duties with regard to promoting ethnicity, disability and gender equality and with promoting community cohesion.



Here we set out in detail:

- What must be covered
- Key issues to consider in developing a single equality policy
- Examples of single equality policies developed by schools

1. Introduction

Your policy can include an introduction which sets out the school's stance on equality, diversity and community cohesion, as well as the school's core values and/or mission statement. It may also offer the context for the policy, for example by outlining what it covers and listing previously separate policies which it replaces.

2. The school context

In this section you can present relevant information about your school. This can describe the social, cultural, linguistic, religious or ethnic diversity of pupils, staff and governors in relation to the population in the geographical area the school covers; information on other aspects of diversity within the school community, such as Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, refugees and/or asylum seekers; information on disability issues and reasonable adjustments considered and/or made; information on other potentially marginalised groups present within the school community; information on gender and on uniformity, or absence of it, of sexual identities of members of the school community; academic, social and other achievements of different groups of pupils; information on staff turnover and pupil mobility; information on the number of school-aged children living in the local area who do not currently attend this school, for example numbers of children who attend other local state schools, private schools or special schools – particularly those whose brothers and sisters are in your school.

3. Vision and values

In this space describe the aims of the policy and the school's rationale for formulating it. Remember that a single equality policy should not be envisaged as a stand-alone document; its main function is to present a set of principles which permeate all other school policies and practices. Explain its relationship to other key school documents. State your school's core values as expressed in the school's aims and/or mission statement.

If you have not yet articulated your school's core values, or have not recently revisited and verified your continued commitment to them, this could be a good opportunity to do so. Consider your school's stance on the fundamental principle of equality and respect for all. Explore the school's position on core inclusive values that underpin this, such as fairness, trust, participation, negotiation and collaboration. Reflect on your commitment to transparency and the availability of opportunities and safe spaces to discuss controversial issues. Find a form of words that describes the kind of school community you are, or are aspiring to become, for example: a strong, vibrant and cohesive community, where young people are well prepared for adult life in a diverse, inclusive society; a welcoming community that fosters positive relationships and values diversity as a rich learning resource; a barrier-free community founded upon a joint sense of belonging, where there is no attainment test for membership. Last but not least, think about the personal qualities which you consider essential in realizing equality and respect for all, such as thoughtfulness, honesty, integrity, caring, kindness, responsibility (not diminished when shared) and humility. Involve all members of the school community in this process. When you have confirmed your school's core values and the personal qualities needed to support them, expect every member of the school community to uphold these or be challenged and held to account.

4. The school's approach to promoting equality for all

This will be the main part of your policy. List here what the school intends to do in order to promote inclusion and equality for all and to promote community cohesion. The information on pages 8-9, 12-13, 16 and 20 can help you do this.

Consider first what the school intends to do on a day-to-day basis and describe this clearly. This may include, for example, a series of statements about staff relationships, including for example between teaching and non-teaching staff; ways in which the curriculum and resources represent and celebrate diversity; ways in which learning is made meaningful and relevant for all pupils; or ways in which promoting equality for all becomes an integral part of the curriculum. A wealth of ideas on how to promote equality through the curriculum are available online, for example at www.qcda.gov.uk/6753.aspx, www.worldofinclusion.com and www.schools-out.org.uk. Think about how you ensure that all pupils are encouraged and helped to participate in every aspect of school life, including educational visits and other trips. Think also about ways in which you help pupils learn about human rights and how to apply and defend them, as well as ways in which you encourage all voices to be heard while upholding your commitment to promoting equality for all.

Some issues may appear relatively straightforward while other more controversial ones may be tougher to negotiate. Remember that individual members of staff, governors, parents or pupils, may have different views on a number of equality issues. Your school's main priority is not to demand that anyone changes their views. What is required is a clear description of what the school considers acceptable or unacceptable, how the school is being organised to promote equality for all, and how people are expected to behave in school. No matter what individual people's views might be, your first priority must be to ensure that the school complies with every aspect of equality legislation and the duty to promote community cohesion.

This can be followed by another set of statements referring to the ways in which pupils' learning and development is monitored. Here you can refer to ways in which you monitor pupil progress to ensure that no identifiable group is underachieving; ways in which you monitor pupils' personal, social and

emotional development to make sure that every young person feels welcomed and sufficiently supported, particularly those at risk of discrimination or marginalisation; and ways in which behaviour, discipline and exclusions are monitored to ensure that no identifiable group is over-represented without a challenge.

The next set of statements can describe how the school consults with relevant stakeholders when considering how to further promote equality and avoid discrimination. This is a good opportunity to outline how the school seeks, listens and responds to the views of parents and carers, the views of pupils and the views of people from minority groups or their representatives and/or allies. Remember that it is a legal requirement for the school to consult with disabled people when considering how to further promote disability equality and avoid discrimination.

Another set of statements can describe how you intend to promote community cohesion. Specific targets will appear in your action plan, but your policy can present your overarching thinking and your commitment to, for example, seeking opportunities to hold events that bring together people from a variety of different backgrounds and to foster good relationships.

Finally, consider a set of statements that refer to the school's functions as employer and community resource. These can cover issues of staff recruitment, induction, development and progression, to indicate how the school ensures that no individual is treated unfairly. They may also cross-reference to other policies (for example procurement and school lettings) to show how seriously the school takes the performance of others on equality issues.

Bringing this whole section together you may add, if this reflects your practice, that a) all school policies undergo an Equality Impact Assessment, considering all statutory equality duties, at the time of their review and b) that action plans for each of the equality duties and for promoting community cohesion appear in the school development plan.

5. Roles and responsibilities

List here who has responsibility for disseminating, implementing, monitoring and reviewing this policy. Describe the ways in which existing members of the school community will be made aware of the new policy and helped to understand their responsibility in implementing it. Refer also to the ways in which this will be brought to the attention of newcomers, visitors and/or contractors. Demonstrate a clear chain of accountability, providing the names and roles of

people who have responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy and for overseeing equality practices and the development of community cohesion, including those who have responsibility for monitoring and acting upon relevant training needs of staff and governors. Clearly explain whose responsibility it is to deal with any racist, disablist, sexist or homophobic incidents, how such incidents are dealt with and who has responsibility for monitoring this process. Last but not least, state who has responsibility for keeping up to date with changes in law, informing staff and governors of the school's statutory duties and making sure that the school complies with all relevant legislation.

6. Monitoring, reviewing, assessing impact

This policy and associated equality targets need to be reviewed annually.

The policy must set out how your school will evaluate its success, including any specific targets against which the success of particular aspects of the policy can be measured.

- How can the school devise effective criteria which show the impact of the single equality policy?
- What targets can the school set by which to measure the success of specific parts of the policy on inclusion?

When it comes to measuring the impact of the changes you plan to implement, the DCSF's Equality Impact Assessment Workbook suggests two key questions:

Could this policy, or does this policy, have a negative impact on one or more of the dimensions of equality? If so, how can we change or modify it, or minimize its impact, or justify it?

Could this policy, or does this policy, have the potential to have a positive impact on equality, by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that already exist? If so, how can we maximize this potential?

The working party should decide what is to be evaluated, how, and by whom, as well as how the results will be used to improve the policy and its implementation. Consider who you want to involve in carrying out impact assessments and who will be consulted as part of this process.

When considering how to assess the impact of this policy, try to think 'outside the box' as much as possible. Undoubtedly evidence of how well pupils are doing according to a range of familiar criteria

(for example attainment, overall progress and other criteria linked to the Every Child Matters agenda and the Ofsted inspection framework) will be carefully considered, but try to think beyond this. Consider not only pupils' learning with regard to the curriculum subjects that are regularly tested in schools, but also their learning about equality, diversity and human rights and about the history of oppression that some minority groups have consistently sustained. Reflect on what pupils need to learn, if they are to be well prepared for adult life in a diverse and inclusive society, as well as on how you have established this and whom you have consulted in the process, then assess the policy's impact on this learning too. Think also of the policy's impact on young people who live in the school's locality but who have so far been unable to access your school's provision, either because this did not seem possible or because their parents did not want them to. Last but not least, consider the impact of your policy on: teaching and non-teaching staff; parents; governors; other visitors to the school; users of school facilities during out-of-school hours; other members of the local community, particularly people from minority groups; and individuals, companies or other organisations that provide goods and services to the school.

7. Formulating action plans

It is a legal requirement that schools develop specific targets for each of the three equality duties stipulated by current legislation and explored in this guide. There is no legal requirement to develop an action plan for community cohesion, but it clearly is good practice to make explicit the action that the school intends to take in order to promote community cohesion. It is also good practice to consider the school's position on other equality issues which are not covered by current legislation but are expected to appear as 'protected characteristics' when new legislation comes into force. These are likely to include issues of sexual identity (sexual orientation and gender reassignment); religion or belief; and pregnancy and maternity. Remember that promoting equality goes far beyond attempts to reduce discrimination and that there are particular legal requirements governing the process of developing action plans; these are listed on pages 7, 15 and 15 of this guide.

Appendix

Two policies are reproduced here, with kind permission from the schools concerned. Neither policy is put forward as an exemplar. They are both offered as examples of alternative ways of constructing a single equality policy.

As this guide is due to be revised when new legislation comes into force (expected in 2011), CSIE remains keen to hear from other schools and local authorities in order to expand the range of examples put forward.

ELMLEA JUNIOR SCHOOL

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY

Elmlea Junior School provides education for all and values diversity as a rich learning resource. All members of our school community are “caring to learn, learning to care” and everything we do is underpinned by the basic moral position that everyone is of equal value by virtue of being human. We take pride in challenging beliefs and/or assumptions which privilege any group of people over others and we promote equality for all, particularly those at risk of discrimination or marginalisation.

We strive to maintain a strong and vibrant school community in which all members share a sense of belonging and which plays a positive role in the school’s neighbourhood and wider community. Respect for all is evident in every aspect of school life and is underpinned by the inclusive values of equality, fairness, trust, collaboration and negotiation.

Rationale

- To articulate the school’s commitment to equality and, therefore, the values that permeate all other school policies and practices.
- To ensure that everyone who belongs to, or comes into contact with, our school community is valued and respected.
- To promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment.
- To recognize the role of the school as a focal point in the local community and as a resource to support learning and develop values.
- To explore the school’s links with the wider, national and global community.
- To comply with statutory duties under equality legislation (see Appendix) and relevant Codes of Practice.
- To address all equality and anti-discrimination issues in one document.

Purpose

- To ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all members of the school community, existing or potential, and any barriers to learning and participation are reduced or removed.
- To ensure that the school promotes equality of opportunity in principle and eliminates direct or indirect discrimination in all its functions as employer, service provider and community resource.
- To ensure that everyone is treated with respect and that any form of prejudice is challenged and eliminated.
- To ensure that the school makes a constructive contribution to the local, national and global community.

Guidelines

- 1) In pursuit of equality and respect for all, every member of the school community is expected to act with honesty, integrity, care, kindness, thoughtfulness, responsibility and humility.
- 2) Every child is entitled to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible to them. Teaching and non-teaching staff work closely together to ensure that all learning tasks are made meaningful and relevant to every learner and that curriculum content and resources represent and celebrate diversity.
- 3) Staff ensure that all children are enabled to participate fully in the life of the school, including educational visits and other school trips.
- 4) Children in school learn about human rights and how to apply and defend them. They are helped to learn to understand others and to value diversity.
- 5) All members of the school community feel able to openly discuss potentially contentious issues, while the school's core values are consistently upheld.
- 6) There is zero tolerance on language or behaviour which is disrespectful to others. Language which insults, embarrasses, intimidates, humiliates or ridicules is unacceptable. Staff use their professional judgement when dealing with any incident. All complaints concerning harassment, abuse or discrimination are recorded by the Head and appropriate action is taken.
- 7) Children's attainment and progress are carefully monitored to ensure that no identifiable group is underachieving. Attention is given to the progress of identifiable groups of children currently in school, as well as to trends over a number of years.
- 8) Children's personal, social and emotional development is carefully monitored to ensure that children's confidence and self-esteem thrive and that every child feels welcomed and sufficiently supported, particularly those at risk of discrimination or marginalisation.
- 9) Pupil behaviour, discipline and exclusions are carefully monitored to ensure that no identifiable group is over-represented without a challenge.
- 10) Parents and carers are seen as key stakeholders in their children's learning and development; their views are regularly sought and respectfully listened and responded to.
- 11) Children's agency in their own learning and development is acknowledged; their views are regularly sought and respectfully listened and responded to, particularly in any decision-making that affects them.
- 12) Disabled people from the local and wider community are regularly consulted when the school considers how to further promote disability equality and avoid discrimination.
- 13) Opportunities are regularly sought to hold events that bring together people from a variety of different backgrounds and foster positive relationships.
- 14) The school actively pursues links with the local, national and global community.
- 15) All processes for staff recruitment, induction, development and progression are scrutinized and carefully explored to ensure that no individual is treated unfairly.
- 16) The diversity of children in the school and local community is represented in the complement of staff and governors.
- 17) All school policies undergo an Equality Impact Assessment, considering all equality strands, at the time of their review.
- 18) The school's procurement policy specifies that a provider's track record on equality and diversity issues informs the decision on whether to engage in business.
- 19) Action Plans for further promoting equality of opportunity across all strands in all of the school's functions (as employer, service provider and community resource) and for promoting community cohesion appear as standing items in the School Development Plan.

A four-page appendix to this policy lists schools' statutory duties and responsibilities; this is not represented here as it replicates information from pages 7-19 of this guide.



Equalities, Diversity and Community Cohesion Policy

Rationale

Bromley Heath Junior School [BHJS] provides education for all, acknowledging that the society within which we live is enriched by diversity. BHJS strives to ensure that the culture and ethos of the school reflects the diversity of ALL members of the school and wider community; we seek to ensure that everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect and fairness. Pupils and other members of the school community are provided with the opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate diversity.

Bromley Heath Junior School also has a duty to promote community cohesion across four dimensions:

- The school community – including all stakeholder groups
- The community within which the school is located – Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- The national community
- The global community

Legal Duties:

- 1) We welcome our duties under the Race Relations 1976 as amended by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005; and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006.
- 2) We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.
- 3) We recognise that these four sets of duties are essential for achieving the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework, and that they reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

Aims

In fulfilling the legal obligations referred to above, we are guided by seven Core Principles:

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value

We see all learners and potential learners as of equal value:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or status
- whichever their gender.

Principle 2: We recognise and respect diversity

Treating people equally does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate, but are differentiated, as appropriate, to take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised
- gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men are recognised.

Principle 3: We foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men, and an absence of sexual harassment

Principle 4: Staff recruitment, retention and development

Policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development:

- whether or not they are disabled
- whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- whichever their gender.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- disabled and non-disabled people
- people of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- girls and boys, women and men.

Principle 6: We consult widely

People affected by a policy or activity should be consulted and involved in the design of new policies, and in the review of existing ones. We involve:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, and girls and boys.

Principle 7: Society as a whole should benefit

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion, and greater participation in public life of:

- disabled people as well as non-disabled
- people of a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- both women and men, girls and boys.

Objectives

We will put our core principles into practice and act as an equality champion and community leader by:

- promoting equality and diversity, for example by assessing the impact of our policies on different groups
- challenging and eradicating discrimination, for example , by acting quickly to deal with all bullying, but particularly that which is aimed at groups as well as individuals, such as racist bullying
- giving a high profile to rights and responsibilities by promoting human rights, justice and fairness throughout the curriculum and wider school community
- promoting community cohesion, for example, through involvement with the School Twinning and Afri-Twin Projects
- opposing all forms of prejudice which stand in the way of fulfilling our legal duties:
 - prejudices around disability and special educational needs
 - prejudices around racism and xenophobia, including those that are directed towards religious groups and communities, for example antisemitism and Islamophobia, and those that are directed against Travellers, refugees and people seeking asylum
 - prejudices reflecting sexism and homophobia.
- developing a long-term strategic plan
- assessing the impact of this policy and our strategic plan

Procedures

We recognise that the actions resulting from a policy are what make a difference. We will draw up an annual action plan [based on our strategic plan] within the framework of the overall School Development Plan.

We will keep each curriculum area and all aspects of learning under review in order to ensure that teaching and learning reflect the seven core principles.

We use quantitative and qualitative data relating to the implementation of this policy, and take action as appropriate. In particular we collect, analyse and use data in relation to achievement, broken down as appropriate according to disabilities and special educational needs, ethnicity and gender.

Prejudice-related incidents will be identified as such when anyone involved with the incident feels that it is motivated by prejudice. All such incidents are referred to the Headteacher, whose role it is to assess, record and deal with all incidents. We take seriously our obligation to report regularly to the local authority about the numbers, types and seriousness of prejudice-related incidents at our school and how they were dealt with.

We respect the religious beliefs and practice of all staff, pupils and parents, and comply with reasonable requests relating to religious observance and practice.

We ensure that the content of this policy is known to all staff and governors and, as appropriate, to all pupils and parents. All staff and governors have access to a selection of resources which discuss and explain concepts of equality, diversity and community cohesion in appropriate detail.

We ensure that all staff, including support and administrative staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

We ensure that the core principles listed above apply also to the full range of our policies and practices, including those that are concerned with:

- learners' progress, attainment and assessment
- learners' personal development, welfare and well-being
- teaching styles and strategies
- admissions and attendance
- staff recruitment, retention and professional development

- care, guidance and support
- behaviour, discipline and exclusions
- working in partnership with parents, carers and guardians
- working with the wider community.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented.

Two link members of the governing body are appointed to maintain a watching brief regarding the implementation of this policy and will undertake appropriate training in order to lead the Governing Body in fulfilling its role.

The headteacher is responsible for implementing the policy; for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are given appropriate training and support; and for taking appropriate action in any cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff are expected to:

- promote an inclusive and collaborative ethos in their classroom
- deal appropriately with any prejudice-related incidents that may occur
- identify and challenge bias and stereotyping in the curriculum
- support pupils in their class for whom English is an additional language
- keep up-to-date with equalities legislation relevant to their work.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Head teacher will report to the Link Governors each term, reviewing progress on the EDCC Action Plan and regarding any incidents involving discrimination or harassment. There will be a standing item on EDCC at every FGB.

Date: 20.11.09

Renewal: December 2010

Lead Responsibility: Headteacher

Governing Body Responsibility: FGB and Link Governors

Appendix A: Summary of legislative requirements

Overview of schools' responsibilities

	Illegal: • discrimination • harassment • victimisation	Duty to promote	Applies to:			Duty to monitor	
			Staff	Pupils	Curriculum	Overall	Specific incidents
Gender	✓ Since 1975	✓	✓	✓	✓		X
Gender (reassignment)	✓ Covered by 1975 Act	X	✓	X	X	X	X
Race	✓ Since 1976	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Disability	✓ Since 1995	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X (Except bullying incidents)
Sexual orientation	✓ Since 2003	X	✓	X	X	X	X
Religion or belief	✓ Since 2003	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Age	✓ Since 2006	X	✓ Unless 'objectively justified'	X	X	X	X

Key legislation

Area	Legislation
Gender (sex)	Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended Equality Act 2006
Gender (reassignment)	Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
Race	Race Relations Act 1976, as amended Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
Disability	Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Sexual orientation	Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, as amended
Religion or belief	Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, as amended Equality Act 2006
Age	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Further information and resources

Please also see list of local authority documents on page inside cover page.

The following list replicates references made in issue-specific parts of this guide and includes additional references relevant to all equality issues.

- Ahmed, S. (2009) *Seen and Not Heard: voices of young British Muslims*. Leicester: Policy Research Centre
- Asare, Y. (2009) *Them and Us: Race Equality Interventions in Predominantly White Schools*. London: Runnymede Trust
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Useful websites

- www.allfie.org.uk Alliance for Inclusive Education
- www.bfi.org.uk/education/teaching/disability A teaching guide to disability and moving image media
- www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/home Institute of Community Cohesion – provides information and a comprehensive list of publications and other resources, including *Community Cohesion: useful links for schools*
- www.communities.gov.uk Department of Communities and Local Government
- www.crae.org.uk Children’s Rights Alliance for England

www.csie.org.uk Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education

www.dcsf.gov.uk/des/ DCSF web pages on the Department's Single Equality Scheme, including a link to the Equality Impact Assessments (EQUIA) Workbook

www.eachaction.org.uk Educational Action Challenging Homophobia

www.emas4success.org Ethnic Minority Achievement Service of the South Gloucestershire Consortium

www.equalities.gov.uk Government Equalities Office; links to National Equality Panel

www.equalityhumanrights.com Equality and Human Rights Commission

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* – the national approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19

www.gires.org.uk Gender Identity Research and Education Society

www.humanismforschools.org.uk Resources for schools on a non-religious approach to life

www.idea.gov.uk Improvement and Development Agency for local government

www.inclusive-solutions.com Inclusive Solutions – offer training and consultancy for developing effective inclusion in mainstream settings

www.insted.co.uk Online resource for Inservice Training and Educational Development

www.lga.gov.uk Local Government Association (LGA) – provides information about developments in local government and advice on community cohesion, including *Community Cohesion an action guide 2004*

www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk Online resource for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans history month (February of each year)

www.ncb.org.uk Council for Disabled Children

www.nooutsiders.sunderland.ac.uk No outsiders: project researching approaches to sexualities equality in primary schools

www.ofsted.gov.uk Ofsted website; useful links include the new inspection framework, guidance for inspectors on reporting on community cohesion and Ofsted's own equality impact assessments

www.qcda.gov.uk/6753.aspx Respect For All: QCDA web pages offering information and resources for teachers who value diversity and want to challenge racism through the curriculum

www.rrsa.org.uk Rights Respecting School Award – a UNICEF UK initiative piloted in UK schools

www.runnymedetrust.org Online resource towards a successful multi-ethnic Britain

www.schools-out.org.uk Schools Out – working towards equality in education for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people since 1974

www.skindeep.org.uk Online resource to address racist bullying and cultural stereotyping in schools

www.stonewall.org.uk Lesbian, gay and bisexual charity

www.teachernet.gov.uk DCSF resource to support the education profession; useful links include the DCSF guide *Legislation on Equality and Diversity: A guide for the action that maintained schools need to take to comply with equality and diversity legislation*

www.theiceproject.com The Islam and Citizenship Education Project

www.worldofinclusion.com The website of Richard Rieser Disability Equality (please see page 14 for more details)

Notes

A different approach by your school

This guide is designed to encourage and help your school to develop a single equality policy. It presents the existing legal duties to promote race/ethnicity, disability and gender equality and to promote community cohesion. Its content, presentation and practical suggestions can support schools in considering fundamental principles of equality for all, developing a single equality policy and shaping provision in line with it.

Written for busy school practitioners, this guide clearly outlines current legal duties and provides a practical framework for writing and reviewing your school's single equality policy. Over and above offering help to complete a paper exercise, the guide invites schools to explore their position on a range of equality issues, articulate their commitment to equality and develop more inclusive provision by actively seeking equality for all, particularly those at risk of discrimination or marginalization.



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RRP £28.00

ISBN 978-1-872001-63-0

