

Equality Impact Assessment

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| Department Education | | Section N/A | | EQIA Team Jim Gibson Jim Broadfoot Elspeth Walker John Lannon | |
| Name of the Policy | Anti-bullying Policy | Date of the Assessment | December 2009 | New or Existing Policy | Revision of Existing |
| Screening results Insert Low/Med/or High | Age L | Dependants L | Disabled L | Gender L | LGBT L |
| | | | | Offenders L | Race L |
| | | | | | Religion L |

Equality Indicators and Evidence (Data, research and consultation with expert groups)

EQIA shows that the Anti-Bullying Policy, if approved, will not have an adverse impact.

The equality indicators considered in preparing this EQIA were: 3. Promoting Social Inclusion; 4. Communicating Information on Services; 5. Consulting Service Users; 6. Ensuring Access to Services

The Department has a published position statement on consultation with stakeholders 'Involved and Informed'. All schools undergo an Annual School Review and also a more detailed, Extended School Review once every three years. The Director regularly meets with staff and parent representatives from all schools and departmental services.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) undertakes formal evaluation of the effectiveness of all schools and of the education functions of the local authority. HMIe is remitted by the Scottish Executive to evaluate the effectiveness of schools and authorities in maintaining discipline and promoting positive behaviour. All HMIe inspection reports are a matter of public record and include a number of key action points to be carried out.

All schools have a Pupil Council which is consulted on matters of policy development and procedural change. Schools also undertake regular individual school and whole-authority surveys of pupils, parents and staff which also address issues of personal safety. Further departmental and corporate consultation opportunities consistently inform the development of the local and authority-wide responses to bullying behaviour. Moreover, the aforementioned review process allows bullying and related issues of management of disruptive behaviour, exclusion and attendance to be addressed. All such reviews conclude with agreed action plans aimed at addressing school and community needs which come to light. Furthermore, Head Teachers have in place formal and/or informal arrangements to ensure that parents are consulted and informed on how bullying is tackled in their schools.

All schools also have a Parent Council through which consultation on significant policy changes and developments at both school and authority levels takes place including in respect of this revised policy.

Head Teachers meet regularly with the Department's Senior Management Team to discuss operational and strategic issues including those relevant to challenging bullying behaviour.

A number of support networks are in place to ensure that school staff are supported in implementing policies developed within the Department. Training is provided to ensure that all staff can play an important role in reducing bullying behaviour and intervening appropriately when it does occur.

As bullying often occurs towards more vulnerable and challenged members of the community and, often, on the basis of stereotyping by peers, this policy is a key plank in removing prejudice and challenging the values of those who bully others.

1. Background

Bullying in schools and in communities is a persistent problem. Dundee City Council has a proud history of challenging bullying behaviour. The Anti-Bullying Policy is designed to increase participation in society by developing personal capacity of children who are vulnerable and prone to victimisation and harassment and those whose behaviour presents a threat to others and themselves. The policy is designed to promote inclusion of all pupils in a supportive social environment and ensure their personal safety and security as far as it is possible to do so. This revised policy updates the previous Departmental Guidelines published in 2007. It is accompanied by a supporting leaflet which also forms the children and young people's version of the policy.

2. Data/Research

Data on attendance, exclusion and attainment are available with respect to all pupils attending schools and off-site centres. Records are maintained by schools and monitored by the Department with respect also to bullying incidents. A separate record is maintained of those incidents which have a racist element. These are the principle sources of data which are used to inform policy and practice development. Further details are given above. In addition, a survey of issues around equality and access to the physical environment and to school premises was conducted in September 2009. The survey included an explicit question about whether bullying had been a factor in the respondent's experience of school life. Of the 581 children and young people from Dundee's schools who responded to the survey, only 15 or 2.5% indicated that bullying had been a factor in their experience of school.

3. Expert groups

All Education Department staff were given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Guidelines from which this Policy has been developed. They were further encouraged to participate in a consultation exercise to support the development of the Guidelines as a Policy.

Schools regularly engage pupils in discussion about community issues such as bullying. Anti-bullying messages are consistently broadcast via each school's personal, social and health education programme delivered to every child in every school. Individual school Pupil Councils and the City-wide Pupil Council meet regularly to give their views on aspects of policy. The City-wide Pupil Council was specifically asked to review the draft policy and their helpful comments helped shape the final version for approval by the Education Committee.

Every Parent Council was consulted prior to completion of the policy and several made extremely valid and insightful suggestions for improvement which were included within the final version.

Respectme, the leading national anti-bullying group, had provided a helpful and constructive critique of the previous guidelines which helped shape the new policy. The opinion of Respectme was also sought in relation to the new policy and provided this feedback by e-mail: "[We are delighted to see the new policy build on the strengths of the 2007 version and commend the diligence which has achieved such a comprehensive document. In particular, the references on page 7 to current practice across all sectors is excellent in demonstrating how the policy and everyday practice are genuinely intertwined. \[...\]the obvious quality and content of the document, coupled with your extensive consultation process, is exemplary in our experience.](#)"

4. Assessment of Impact

The Policy will have low impact in terms of contravening legislation on equality. If implemented effectively, this will reduce offending behaviour and have a positive impact on ethos within schools and the wider community. It will proactively protect equality groups who may be subject to group or individual harassment or other unfair treatment.

5. Reducing Adverse Impact

Training on issues related to promoting positive behaviour is available on a regular basis to staff in every centre managed by the Education Department. Schools often arrange and deliver their own in-house training. Management Information Systems will be improved to ensure that appropriate data can be made available in schools and other centres and to central planning teams. This should also allow the Department to maintain statistics on both the victims and perpetrators of bullying in terms of equality groupings and to take appropriate action should specific trends be identified.

6. Formal Consultation

Public engagement will be an ongoing process within our Departmental 'Involved and Informed' policy. Consultation opportunities have also been made available for school staff and their trade unions to be involved in drafting of this Policy. Head Teachers, parents and pupils were consulted as described above.

7. Publication of Findings

This document summarises EQIA findings for the attached committee report and will be available on the council Equality and Diversity website. Alternative published formats are available on request.

8. Monitoring and Review

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed every three years. When online recording is established as envisaged within the policy, detailed annual reporting will be enabled.

Signature of Lead

Jim Gibson, Head of Support for Learning, Education Department

ACTION REQUIRED

1. Review the Anti-Bullying Guidelines every 3 years.
2. Monitor data maintained by schools with respect to bullying behaviour and implementing the authority policy

Target date for completion of Action 1 is December 2012 by lead officer, Jim Gibson, Head of Support for Learning and at three-yearly intervals thereafter.

Target date for completion of Action 2 is annually by the Senior Management Team.