

Equality Impact Assessment

Department Education		Section N/A		EQIA Team Jim Gibson Jim Broadfoot Elspeth Walker Ken McAra	
Name of the Policy	Offsite Education Service expansion	Date of the Assessment	22 October 2007	New or Existing Policy	Existing (Revision)
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 expansion of the Offsite Education Service, if approved, will not have an adverse impact.

The equality indicators considered in preparing this EQIA were: 1. Meeting Needs; 3. Promoting Social Inclusion; 6. Ensuring Access to Services

Evidence from schools shows an increasing referral rate for offsite education provision for nominated individuals from primary and secondary sector schools across the city .

Consideration will be given to the collection of further quantitative and qualitative data if Committee accepts the proposals in the Report 542-2007.

1. Background

Formerly known as alternative education provision, this sector has seen a number of Reports in recent years (ref: Reports 648-2005, 703-2005 and 67-2006). These reports collectively paved the way for the current report for which this EQIA has been prepared.

2. Data/Research

Although the length of each exclusion has been diminishing in line with Departmental expectations, numbers of exclusions - particularly of pupils experiencing multiple exclusions - have been rising. There has been an increasing demand from schools to provide alternative possibilities for the small number of pupils whose disruptive behaviour is at the extreme end of intransigence, defiance and intimidation to increase the levels of security and safety for those pupils themselves, their peers and school staff.

Data indicates clearly that attendance and attainment both rise significantly when pupils are referred into appropriate offsite provision. Simultaneously, exclusion rates drop equally significantly thus indicating that attendees gain maximum benefit from the highly individualised and responsive approaches to supported learning employed in offsite education.

3. Expert groups

All Education Department staff were given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the draft revision. Parent and pupil focus groups consistently highlight the positive view they have of learning experiences offered to pupils who attend offsite learning centres. Staff working in offsite centres and other provision were given a direct opportunity to put their views with respect to a set of draft proposals out of which consultation process grew the current Report.

4. Assessment of Impact

This development has low adverse impact on equality. It has the potential to reduce offending behaviour by contributing to creating and maintaining a fairer environment in which to work and learn. With the express aim of providing a learning environment that will help disenchanted and disengaged young people re-engage with education and with society, they will have access to fairer and more equal social and educational opportunity. The move will ensure that the young people leaving offsite education at the end of their statutory education will be signposted towards appropriate education, employment or training opportunities.

5. Reducing Adverse Impact

As we believe there is no adverse impact, there is no additional step to be taken to reduce adverse impact.

6. Formal Consultation

Consultation has taken place with schools staff via every Head Teacher in primary, secondary, special and off-site sectors. Parent and pupil focus groups in offsite learning centres have taken part in consultation on what is done well and what could be done better in these centres.

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 revised provision will be reviewed by January 2009 and at three-yearly intervals thereafter.

Signature of Lead

Jim Gibson, Head of Support for Learning, Education Department

ACTION REQUIRED

1. Review impact of revised service in January 2009
2. Ensure ongoing monitoring of the Service
3. Revise formally every three years from January 2009 onwards.

Target date for completion of Action 1 is January 2009 by lead officer, Jim Gibson, Head of Support for Learning
As Action 2 will be an ongoing activity no target date has been set for its completion. Action 3 will see the next formal review take place in January 2012.