

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA) TOOL

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT IS REQUIRED

Policy title	School Handbook Review
Which national outcome(s) does the policy contribute to?	Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
What is the purpose of the policy (or changes which are to be made to the policy)?	To improve the school information for parents and carers in line with the public consultation findings and reflecting the changes under Curriculum for Excellence.
Name of Branch or Division	Curriculum Unit
Directorate or Agency	DG Learning and Justice
Lead EQIA official	Maria Gray

STEP ONE - Describe the assessment process

Please describe the process that you plan to follow (or have followed) in order to complete your EQIA (e.g. holding workshops with equality stakeholders, consulting, conducting research, using existing evidence).

We held a public consultation between November 2010 and March 2011. This consisted of online survey and eleven engagement events in locations across Scotland. In addition, five focus groups were conducted targeting parents of children with Additional Support needs, Black and Minority Ethnic parents and parents living in areas of high deprivation. Parents with different religious beliefs were also included in these focus groups and several organisations representing different religious beliefs and disabilities and equality stakeholders have contributed to the consultation.

We also looked at existing evidence. There are no statistics available for parents and carers but yearly statistics are published on pupils in schools.

STEP TWO – Gathering and Analysing the Evidence (with help from the Analytical Services Division)

AGE

1) Evidence

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the needs and experiences of people in different age groups? Include:

a) evidence from research & statistics

There is no statistical evidence of the different needs and experiences of different age groups represented among parents and carers.

b) evidence from consultation & engagement

No evidence of different needs and experiences of parents and carers based on their age was identified through the consultation and engagement.

2) Effects / Impacts

Describe how your policy may affect people of different ages, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to different needs/promote equality/good relations¹

The handbook is provided to all parents and carers regardless of their age and should not discriminate against any particular age groups among parents and carers.

b) negative effects² including any direct or indirect discrimination

None

¹ Refer to the EQIA guidance (Step two) for more information on positive effects and promoting equality (i.e: eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations).

² Refer to the EQIA guidance for more information on potential negative effects.

DISABILITY

1) Evidence

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the needs and experiences of disabled people? Include:

a) evidence from research & statistics

According to the 2001 Census there were 114,548 parents aged 16 to 74 with a limiting long-term illness or disability with dependent children. The breakdown by the type of disability was not provided. The findings from the 2011 Census are not available yet.

b) evidence from consultation & engagement

The consultation and engagement highlighted the need to provide school handbook in a range of formats to ensure it is accessible to all parents and carers including those with disabilities. In addition, the parents and carers of children with additional support needs (ASN) have highlighted the need to include ASN specific information. (This is in line with the Additional Support for Learning legislation)

2) Effects / Impacts

Describe how your policy may affect disabled people, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to different needs/promote equality/good relations

By having the school handbook available in different formats to ensure it is accessible to parents / carers with disability, there should be a positive impact on parental involvement and improving school / home partnership and increasing access to opportunities.

b) negative effects including any direct or indirect discrimination
None

GENDER, INCLUDING PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

1) Evidence

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the different needs and experiences of women and men? Include:

a) evidence from research & statistics

No statistical / research evidence of different needs and experiences of women and men in terms of school handbook information.

b) evidence from consultation & engagement

Both genders were represented in the consultation and engagement and no evidence of the different needs and experiences in terms of school handbook information was identified.

2) Effects / Impacts:

Describe how your policy may affect women and men, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to different needs/promote equality/good relations

The school handbook is provided to all parents and carers regardless of gender so no discriminatory impact is envisaged.

b) negative effects including any direct or indirect discrimination

None.

GENDER IDENTITY³/TRANSGENDER PEOPLE⁴

1) **Evidence**

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the needs and experiences of different people in respect of gender identity/transgender people? Include:

a) evidence from research & statistics

No statistical evidence in terms of gender identity / transgender people represented among parents and carers.

b) evidence from consultation & engagement

No evidence was identified in the consultation and engagement process in terms of different needs for school handbook information in respect of gender / gender identity among parents and carers.

2) **Effects / Impacts**

Describe how your policy may affect different people in relation to gender identity, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to different needs/promote equality/good relations

b) negative effects including any direct or indirect discrimination

³ This is an individual's internal self-perception of their own gender. A person may identify as female, male, or as androgynous/polygender (identify his/her gender as a combination of aspects of man and woman or alternatively as being neither a man nor a woman).

⁴ Transgender: refers to a whole range of people who find their gender identity or gender expression differs in some way from the gender assumptions made by others about them when they were born. This can include: androgyne/polygender/genderqueer people, crossdressing/transvestite people, intersex people, and others. (Please refer to the EQIA Guidance for a further definition of these terms).

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

1) **Evidence**

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the different needs and experiences of people in respect of sexual orientation (lesbian, gay and bisexual)? Include:

- a) evidence from research & statistics

There is no statistical evidence of sexual orientation among parents and carers.

- b) evidence from consultation & engagement

No evidence was identified in the consultation and engagement process in terms of different needs for school handbook information in respect of sexual orientation among parents and carers.

2) **Effects & Impacts**

Describe how your policy may affect people in relation to their sexual orientation, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

- a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to different needs/promote equality/good relations

The handbook should inform parents about how any sensitive aspects of curriculum will be handled and how parents / carers will be consulted and involved. This will be an opportunity to reflect different needs and interests of parents and carers (and pupils) and provide opportunity for them to be involved in their children's learning.

- b) negative effects including any direct or indirect discrimination
None

RACE⁵

1) **Evidence**

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the needs and experiences of people from different racial and ethnic groups? Include:

a) evidence from research & statistics

We do not have statistical evidence about the race and ethnic characteristics of parents and carers. However, we know that there were 35,142 children from minority ethnic groups and 17,713 children with English as an additional language in Scottish schools in 2011.

b) evidence from consultation & engagement

One of the focus group targeted black/ minority ethnic parents and carers. The main obstacle from this group of parents was access to information from school due to the varying degree of knowledge of English.

2) **Effects & Impacts**

Describe how your policy may affect people of different races and ethnicities, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to different needs/promote equality/good relations

The school handbook is provided to all parents regardless their race / ethnicity. Some parents / carers may require the handbook in a different language which they can request from the local authority. This should enhance their understanding of the education provided by their child's school and help them in being more involved in their child's learning.

b) negative effects including any direct or indirect discrimination
None

⁵ The definition of race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin.

RELIGION AND BELIEF

1) **Evidence**

In relation to your policy, what does the evidence tell you about the different needs and experiences of people in respect of religion and belief? Include:

a) evidence from research & statistics

Just over two-thirds of the Scottish population reported currently having a religion in the 2001 Census. More than six out of ten people said that their religion was Christian (65.09%); 42.40% Church of Scotland, 15.88% Roman Catholic and 6.81% Other Christian.

After Christianity, Islam was the most common faith with 0.84% (42,600 people) describing their religion as Muslim. This is followed by people from Another Religion (0.53% or 27,000 people), Buddhists (0.13% or 6,000 people), Sikhs (0.13% or 6,600 people), Jews (0.13% or 6,400 people), and Hindus (0.11% or 5,600 people). Overall, people in these religion groups account for 2.80% of all people in all religion groups.

b) evidence from consultation & engagement

One of the focus groups took place in a denominational Roman Catholic school and included parents and carers of Roman Catholic faith. The Black Minority Ethnic focus group also included parents and carers of different faiths and representative organisations responded to the online survey. The key findings from the consultation and engagement was that the school handbook should reflect the school's policy on religion: how it created opportunities for religious instruction and observance and the extent to which it reflected any particular religious affiliation.

2) **Effects & Impacts**

Describe how your policy may affect people in relation to their religion and belief, and respond to their different needs. Describe any:

a) positive effects & ways by which your policy helps respond to

different needs/promote equality/good relations

The handbook will specify the school's denominational status and any partnerships with denominational bodies (if appropriate), the provision for religious instruction and observance and arrangements for parents who wish to exercise the right to withdraw their child. This results in the handbook being inclusive and reflecting the needs of parents of carers with different faiths / religions as well as those without faith or religion.

b) negative effects including any direct or indirect discrimination

None

OTHER IMPACTS

Please describe any other impacts that may have been considered as part of this policy development (e.g. impacts on human rights; socioeconomic impact).

We have considered socio-economic disadvantage as a potential barrier to effective parental involvement and we conducted focus group with parents and carers in deprived communities to ensure their needs and interests were reflected in the school handbook proposals.

STEP THREE – Describe how equality analysis has informed and helped to shape your policy

a) Describe any steps which have been/will be taken as a result of information uncovered through the EQIA process.

We have included the relevant information requested by different groups of parents and carers through the consultation in the school handbook proposals.

We will have an Equalities section in the guidance to highlight the need for local authorities and schools to consider the different needs of their communities in the development and publication of their school handbook, having regard to the Equalities legislation. The Guidance will also refer to the Scottish Government publication on Principles of Inclusive Communication.

b) Describe any equality issues that you identified in Step 2, which you haven't addressed or mitigated, and explain the reasons why.

N/A

c) Explain whether your EQIA analysis had an impact on the size of your resource and/or the way you use resources.

No

d) Explain whether there are implications on costs, and the focus of spend, arising from your EQIA analysis. Do you have the budget to cover your costs, and has the EQIA changed how you use your budget?

No

STEP FOUR – Risks and Monitoring

Describe any **risks** for your policy in terms of delivering on the equality issues identified in the EQIA, and describe how you will mitigate the identified risks.

The duty to publish school handbooks in accordance with the relevant regulations rests with local authorities. To date local authorities have been publishing school handbooks in accordance with the Education (School and Placing Information) (Scotland) Regulations 1982 and we are planning to amend and consolidate these Regulations in April / May 2012.

Local authorities have to involve all parents and carers equally under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 and must have regard to how their strategy for parental involvement will promote equal opportunities. The “Parents as partners in their children’s learning toolkit” (<http://bit.ly/ArqkL5>) provides guidance and suggestions how to improve the opportunities for all parents and carers to get involved, providing examples of engaging with specific groups such as Gypsy and Traveller families.

Considering that local authorities have a duty to comply with the equalities legislation and this is further reinforced in their duty to promote parental involvement as described above, the risks of them not delivering on the equality issues identified in the EQIA which will be reflected in the 2012 Regulations and the associated guidance is very low.

Explain how you will **monitor** and evaluate this policy, to measure progress on the equality issues identified in the EQIA. Include information on when the monitoring & evaluation will take place, and who is responsible for undertaking it.

We will have an ongoing engagement with local authorities and parents through the National Parent Forum of Scotland to ensure that the school handbook meets the needs of all parents and carers.

STEP FIVE - Authorisation and Publication

1) Authorisation by a Deputy Director

The EQIA should now be authorised by a Deputy Director or equivalent. Please note that the lead EQIA official is responsible for saving the authorisation form on Objective. The authorisation form will not be published on the Scottish Government's website.

Policy title	School Handbook Review
Name of Branch or Division	Curriculum Unit
Directorate or Agency	Learning and Justice Directorate

Please confirm that:

- The EQIA has informed the development of the policy
Yes x No ☐
- Opportunities to promote equality in respect of age, gender, disability, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation, and gender identity have been considered, i.e:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation
 - removing or minimising any barriers/disadvantages
 - taking steps which assist with promoting equality and meeting people's different needs
 - encouraging participation (e.g. in public life)
 - fostering good relations, tackling prejudice, promoting understanding.Yes x No ☐

I am satisfied with the equality impact assessment that has been carried for the above policy, and give my authorisation for the EQIA to be published on the Scottish Government's website.

Name	Jackie Brock
Position	Deputy Director Curriculum, Health & Wellbeing
Authorisation Date	28/03/12

2) Publication

Once the authorisation is gained, the EQIA should be emailed to the Equality and Communities Division at gender.mainstreaming.equality@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

The Equality and Communities Division will ensure that your EQIA is published on the Scottish Government's website.