

## Equality principles and priorities – training handouts at one school, September 2012

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These handouts were developed for an inset day at a secondary school in September 2012. There were about 125 staff present, including office and admin staff. The session as a whole lasted about three and a half hours, including a break, and the programme had four components:

- **An introductory talk** based on two quizzes – [The Equality Act 2010](#) and [A Quiz for Thought](#) (40 minutes).
  - **Discussion** – a jigsaw exercise, as described below (90 minutes). There were five handouts:
    1. [Four enquiries](#)
    2. [Difference and disagreement](#)
    3. [Evidence of due regard](#)
    4. [Tackling prejudice, promoting understanding](#)
    5. [Setting and writing measurable objectives](#)
  - **Implications and next steps** – discussions in departmental groups about practical implications for each individual member of staff, each department or team, and the school as a whole (30 minutes).
  - **Reflections** – structured sharing of thoughts at a plenary session (20 minutes).
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### **Jigsaw exercises**

A jigsaw exercise typically has three stages:

1. Participants form base groups – usually each group has three or four members. They are given descriptions of the enquiry groups in which they will be working in the next stage and they decide amongst themselves who will go to which enquiry group.
  2. Participants work in enquiry groups, each enquiry group engaging in a different task.
  3. They return to their base groups and report back on what they have done and learnt.
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### **Background papers**

In addition to all five handouts, the two quizzes were posted after the inset day on the school intranet, as also was a customised paper on [the changing legal framework](#).

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## Four enquiries

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### **A. Difference and disagreement** (*Paper 2*)

The parliamentary bill leading to the Equality Act 2010 had all-party support in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. There isn't complete consensus, however, between and within political parties, about what in practice the Act requires. Similarly there are uncertainties and disagreements in wider society.

Paper 2 contains fictionalised descriptions of real conversations and incidents that have taken place over the last few years within or near schools. Choose up to four of them and with each consider possible actions and developments in the next few minutes, the next few days, the next few weeks.

Then, in the light of your discussion, begin formulating some general principles for dealing with incidents such as these.

### **B. Evidence of due regard** (*Paper 3*)

Ofsted is bound by the public sector equality duty (PSED) stated in section 149 of the Equality Act, as are all public bodies, and is therefore required to have due regard for equalities in the inspections which it conducts and the reports which it publishes. Paper 3 contains extracts from a briefing paper issued in early 2012 for all Ofsted inspectors about what will count as evidence of due regard in schools.

How, in your view, might Ofsted inspectors rate this school in relation to each of the items in paper 3? Use Ofsted's own grades in the column on the right: 1) outstanding 2) good 3) requires improvement 4) inadequate.

### **C. Tackling prejudice, promoting understanding** (*Paper 4*)

Ofsted has indicated that when inspecting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) it is mindful of schools' duty to promote community cohesion, and of their duty under the Equality Act to foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Further, Ofsted has provided a brief list of the evidence it looks for when evaluating SMSC, and this is shown in paper 4. With each item in the list, bearing in mind the requirements and concerns of the Equality Act, give a grade to this school: 1) outstanding 2) good 3) needs improvement and 4) inadequate.

And with each item reflect on the ways and extent that your own work, as an individual and as a member of a team or department, contributes to SMSC at this school.

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#### **D. Setting and writing measurable objectives** (*Paper 5*)

Since April 2012 every school has had a legal duty to set and publish at least one equality objective which is measurable. Paper 5 cites some of the objectives which have been published so far this year by various secondary schools in England and Wales.

Which of these, in your view, would be most worth adopting or adapting at this school? Select between three and five, and tick these in the right hand column.

Then, with one or more of those you have selected, consider:

- What are your reasons for selecting this?
  - Is it measurable? If not, how can it be rephrased or expanded?
  - Is it about greater equality outcomes amongst students? If not, can it be rephrased or expanded?
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## Difference and disagreement – what do I say, what do I do?

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### **My dad agrees with this**

A student brings to school a leaflet advertising a demonstration taking place locally next weekend. 'End the creeping Islamification of our precious country,' it says. The student says to a teacher: 'My dad agrees with this. Do you, miss?'

### **Doesn't appear to mind**

A girl from Lithuania has joined the class. She is referred to by staff as Polish and addressed by other students as Pollywog. She doesn't appear to mind.

### **Same as most teachers**

'You only ever pick on black or Asian kids,' says a student to a teacher. 'You're racist, that's why, same as most white people.'

### **Rather die**

A girl gets teased because, say others, she's fat and will never get a boyfriend. 'I'll starve myself,' she tells a teacher. 'I'd rather die than put up with any more of this.'

### **It won't be his fault**

The elder sibling of a learning-disabled student says to a teacher: 'I'm really worried about him. Other kids tease him all the time and he gets no support from teachers. One day he's going to snap and he could hurt someone, and he'll be excluded and it won't be his fault.'

### **Political correctness gone mad**

'Children are children,' says a colleague, 'and they're sometimes nasty to each other, it's a fact of life. So kids need to be tough, resilient. It's political correctness gone mad to use words about them like racist, sexist, homophobic.'

### **On the bus**

A girl tells a teacher she frequently gets touched sexually by boys on a school bus and when she says she doesn't like it and tells them to stop they call her a dyke. Other girls on the bus don't defend her, but say they suspect she fancies them and they need to keep away from her.

### **Not saying, miss**

There's a class discussion of whether a new mosque should be built close to the school. The teacher addresses a (non-Muslim) student: 'What do think?' – 'Not saying miss.' – 'Why not?' – 'Cos if I told you what I think you'd give me a detention.'

### **Playing football**

Boys playing football in the playground are heard calling each other Nigger and Paki. Whenever someone fumbles a pass or misses a tackle the others cheerfully rebuke him with words such as poof, gay, fairy and wanker.

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### **What about the rights of Christians?**

At a parents evening the head says students in the playground use the term gay too much as a casual insult. A parent stands up and says, passionately: 'We're a Christian family and we believe homosexuality is an abomination. What about the rights of Christians? Why doesn't the Equality Act respect the rights of Christians?'

### **Overheard**

A colleague is overheard rebuking a group of boys who are talking together when they should be getting on with their work. 'You lot,' says the colleague, 'stop behaving like a bunch of girls.'

### **Freedom of speech**

Some Year 12 students announce they are going to organise a Draw a Picture of Mohammed Day. The headteacher rules that this is unacceptable. So the students draw up a petition saying that the head is denying their human right to freedom of speech. Many students sign it, also various people in the locality, and two of the school's governors, and a member of staff.

### **You'll be all right**

The school has a system for receiving anonymous messages from students about problems and concerns. 'I told a teacher I get a lot of abuse from other kids because they think I'm gay,' writes someone. 'She said well you do appear to be gay. Stop acting so gay and you'll be all right.'

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## Evidence of due regard

In February 2012 Ofsted published a briefing paper entitled *Inspecting Equalities*. Its intention, it said, was 'to help inspectors ... to judge the impact of schools' work in advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination'. This paper lists indicators of good practice that the briefing paper mentions.

How, in your view, might Ofsted inspectors rate this school in relation to each of these items? Use Ofsted's own grades in the column on the right: 1) outstanding 2) good 3) requires improvement 4) inadequate.

Signs of due regard	Grade
<p><b>1. Consulting and involving parents and carers</b> Evidence from parents and carers and other stakeholders shows the effectiveness of the school's procedures for consulting and involving parents and carers, and for engaging with local groups and organisations, and these have regard for the concerns and requirements of the Equality Act.</p>	
<p><b>2. Curriculum coverage</b> There is coverage in the curriculum of equalities issues, particularly with regard to tackling prejudice and promoting community cohesion and understanding diversity.</p>	
<p><b>3. Dealing with prejudice-related bullying</b> There are clear procedures for dealing with prejudice-related bullying and incidents, and there is appropriate staff training that equips staff to identify and deal with this effectively.</p>	
<p><b>4. Derogatory language</b> Students are confident that staff will address all issues of discrimination and prejudice, including the use of derogatory language.</p>	
<p><b>5. Equality impact analysis</b> Before introducing important new policies or measures, the school carefully assesses their potential impact on equalities for its current and prospective students and parents, positive or negative, and keeps a record of the analysis and judgements which it makes. The data is available for public scrutiny.</p>	
<p><b>6. Evidence of commitment</b> The school can demonstrate positive action on advancing equality and tackling discrimination, for example in a statement of overarching policy, references in the school improvement plan or self-evaluation documents, the prospectus, routine bulletins and newsletters, and occasional letters to parents and carers.</p>	
<p><b>7. Hard-to-reach communities and groups</b> The school takes active steps to promote its relationships with all parents/carers and students, particularly those in communities or from groups that it finds hard to reach.</p>	

<p><b>8. How students think and feel about the school</b> Evidence from students shows how the school makes improvements for all students, based on how they individually and collectively think and feel about the school.</p>	
<p><b>9. Imbalances</b> The school is aware of gender imbalances in 'upper ability' groups, and which groups of learners, for example by ethnicity, are participating in after-school sport.</p>	
<p><b>10. Impact of CPD</b> The school's programme for continuing professional development (CPD) is inclusive of all staff and includes equalities matters, both directly and incidentally, and inspectors can identify clear evidence of impact at inspection.</p>	
<p><b>11. Knowledge about different groups of students</b> Senior staff and governors know about the relative attainment and progress of different groups of students, and monitor their performance and other data relevant to improving outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>12. Pregnancy</b> There are clear procedures for supporting the educational achievement of pregnant students and young parents.</p>	
<p><b>13. Progression information</b> The school tracks and analyses progression information, for example the proportions of students who continue education or training or enter employment, and identifies any barriers for particular groups.</p>	
<p><b>15. Recruitment and promotion of staff</b> There is good equal opportunities practice in the recruitment and promotion of staff, both teaching and support or administrative.</p>	
<p><b>14. Students feel safe</b> Questionnaires and focused discussion groups show that all students feel safe from all kinds of bullying, harassment and oppressive behaviour.</p>	
<p><b>16. Use of data to set objectives</b> Data on inequalities of outcome and participation is used when setting objectives for achievable and measurable improvements.</p>	

**Note**

All phrasings in this paper are from the Ofsted document *Inspecting Equalities*, re-issued in September 2012. But some of the items have been slightly edited for the sake of clarity when quoted out of context, and to make them relevant to this school, and each has been given a title for ease of reference. The items are presented in alphabetical order according to their title, not in the order in which they appear in the Ofsted document.

## Tackling prejudice, promoting understanding

Ofsted has indicated that when inspecting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) it is mindful of schools' duty to promote community cohesion, and of their duty under the Equality Act 2010 to foster good relations by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Further, Ofsted has provided a brief list of the evidence it looks for when evaluating SMSC, and this is shown below. With each item in the list, bearing in mind the requirements of the Equality Act, give a grade to this school:

1) outstanding 2) good 3) requires improvement and 4) inadequate. And with each item reflect on the ways and extent that your own work, as an individual and as a member of a team or department, contributes to SMSC.

Examples of relevant evidence	Grade
<p><b>1. Profound aspects of human experience</b> Students are reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, using their imagination and creativity, and developing curiosity in their learning.</p>	
<p><b>2. Right and wrong</b> Students develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school.</p>	
<p><b>3. Social skills</b> Students take part in a range of activities requiring social skills.</p>	
<p><b>4. Respect for diversity</b> Students develop awareness of and respect for diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation and disability.</p>	
<p><b>5. Understanding of options and challenges</b> Students gain a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education and training.</p>	
<p><b>6. Appreciation</b> Students develop an appreciation of theatre, music, art and literature.</p>	
<p><b>7. Participation in democracy</b> Students develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic modern Britain.</p>	
<p><b>8. Sporting and cultural</b> Students respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities.</p>	
<p><b>9. Range of different cultures</b> Students understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.</p>	

## Setting and writing measurable objectives

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### Introductory notes

Since April 2012 every school has had a legal duty to set and publish at least one equality objective which is measurable. This paper cites some of the objectives which have been published so far this year by various secondary schools in England and Wales. Which of these, in your view, would be most worth adopting or adapting at this school? Select between three and five, and tick these in the right hand column.

Then, with one or more of those you have selected, consider:

- What are your reasons for selecting this?
- Is it measurable? If not, how might it be rephrased or expanded?
- Is it about greater equality outcomes amongst students? If not, how might it be rephrased or expanded?

Possible objectives	Worth adopting here?
<p><b>1. Awareness</b> To increase student, staff and governors awareness of legal and human rights and the responsibilities that underpin society.</p>	
<p><b>2. Behaviour</b> To increase social and emotional skills for students with BESD (behavioural, emotional and social difficulties) so that they have improved ability to handle difficult situations and there is reduced classroom disruption.</p>	
<p><b>3. Careers (general)</b> To promote opportunities for boys and girls to learn more about career opportunities which challenge gender stereotyping.</p>	
<p><b>4. Careers (specific)</b> To double the percentage of Yr 8 girls expressing interest in pursuing a career in physics, technology or engineering by the end of 2012-13.</p>	
<p><b>5. Data (general)</b> To use our own and other local, regional and national data and research to build a full picture of differences in achievement between students with different characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.</p>	
<p><b>6. Data (specific)</b> To use this full data to track and set proactive interventions based on national or regional trends or priorities in order to offset any potential inequalities in attainment and attendance that are not currently</p>	

identified.	
<b>7. Exclusions</b> To achieve a 40 per cent reduction in the number of fixed termed exclusions of Somali and African-Caribbean students over 2012-13 and 2013-14.	
<b>8. ICT</b> To achieve an increase of 10 per cent in Yr 9 girls choosing ICT as a GCSE option for 2013-14.	
<b>9. Participation</b> To increase the participation of students from minority, marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds in school life, and to ensure they are involved in the decision-making processes of the school.	
<b>10. Physical activity</b> To ensure that girls are equally involved and participating in physical activity.	
<b>11. Prejudice-related bullying (general)</b> To prevent and respond to all hate incidents and prejudice-based bullying	
<b>12. Prejudice-related bullying (specific)</b> To achieve a 40 per cent reduction in prejudice-related behaviour in relation to homophobia, racism and religious stereotyping over 2012-13 and 2013-14.	
<b>13. Satisfaction</b> To demonstrate, through a survey of Somali and African- Caribbean pupils and parents at the end of 2012-13, at least 75 per cent satisfaction with the way in which their aspirations and learning needs are met.	
<b>14. Sexual health</b> To increase the confidence of some female students in accessing sexual health services.	
<b>15. Support for LGBT staff and students</b> To increase support for lesbian, gay and bisexual sexual minority students and staff.	
<b>16. Workplace</b> To provide a welcoming and supportive workplace for sexual minority staff.	

## Notes

All the objectives cited this tabulation are quoted in an article entitled [Equality Objectives in Schools – smart and unsmart directions of travel](#), published on the Insted consultancy website in October 2012.

There is also further discussion of measurable objectives in the Insted paper entitled [The Equality Act 2010 – specific duties for schools](#).