

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY SCREENING

FOR SHARED EDUCATION POLICY

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1. POLICY SCOPING

1.1 Title of policy

Shared Education

1.2 Type of Policy Development

This is a new policy

1.3 Description of policy

The aim of the Shared Education policy is: **To encourage and facilitate collaborative working across educational providers, on a cross sectoral basis, to deliver educational benefits to learners, promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.**

The objectives of the policy are to:

- provide all children and young people with an opportunity to participate in a programme of Shared Education;
- provide greater opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively;
- improve access for learners to the full range of the curriculum, to high quality teaching, and to modern facilities;
- improve educational and reconciliation outcomes; and
- contribute to the creation of a more harmonious society.

The intended outcomes of the policy are:

- an increase in the opportunity for young people to learn in a shared environment (both formal and non-formal);
- an increase in the number of children and young people participating in Shared Education;
- an increase in the number of schools participating in Shared Education; and
- an increase in the number of schools sharing facilities and resources.

The policy sets out the key actions and interventions that DE will take to support the development of Shared Education.

1.4 What factors could contribute to, or detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy?

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| None | |
| Legislative | ✓ |
| Financial | ✓ |
| Others please specify) | ✓ |

Others: Widespread community and political tension and unrest could detract from the intended outcomes of the policy.

1.5 Main stakeholders affected

| | |
|--|---|
| Pupils (Actual or Potential) | ✓ |
| Parents | ✓ |
| Teaching Staff | ✓ |
| Trade Unions or Professional Organisations | |
| Other Public Sector Organisations | |
| Departmental Staff | |
| Others (please specify) | ✓ |

Others: Boards of Governors, Youth Service Management Committees, Youth Work practitioners; Early Years practitioners.

1.6 Who is responsible for: (a) Devising the policy

The Department of Education (DE)

(b) Implementing it

DE, Education Arms Length Bodies, schools and youth work settings.

(c) Explain the relationship?

DE establishes and monitors the policy. It will also implement a number of the key actions. Other actions will fall to Arms Length Bodies for implementation. On the ground, Shared Education programmes will be delivered by early years settings, schools and youth work settings.

1.7 Other policies or objectives with a bearing on this policy

The ***Programme for Government*** sets out three specific objectives relating to Shared Education:

- to establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to advise on advancing Shared Education;
- to ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in Shared Education programmes by 2015; and
- to substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015.

The ***Together: Building a United Community Strategy*** undertakes to “*enhance the quality and extent of Shared Education provision, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child’s educational experience.*”

Shared Education policy has been particularly informed by the ***Report of the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education*** (March 2013).

Shared Education Policy sits within a broader education policy framework designed to improve educational outcomes for young people and tackle the significant tail of educational under-achievement that has characterised our education system by breaking the cycle of social disadvantage, educational failure and restricted life chances.

2. EVIDENCE

2.1 What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy?

| Section 75 Category | Details of Evidence/Information |
|--------------------------|--|
| <p>Religious Belief</p> | <p>Shared Education is designed to promote opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.</p> <p>The need for and development of this policy has been informed by a range of academic studies and reports from a range of stakeholder organisations which detail the continuing negative impact of religious and political division on the attitudes of children and young people in Northern.</p> <p>For example, the Young Life and Times Survey (2013) reported that twenty-six percent of young people said that they rarely or never socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community. Further, seventy-eight per cent of young people also felt that religion will always make a difference to the way people feel about each other here.</p> <p>In addition, the development of the policy has been informed by the fact that our education system largely reflects traditional divides in society. 92.6% of children and young people here attend either Catholic maintained schools or schools that are either state controlled or voluntary and that are mainly attended by Protestant children and young people.</p> <p>There is an extensive body of international research regarding the effectiveness of collaboration between different types of schools in divided societies.</p> |
| <p>Political Opinion</p> | <p>Shared Education is designed to promote opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.</p> <p>The need for and development of this policy has been informed by a range of academic studies and reports from a range of stakeholder organisations which detail the continuing negative impact of religious and political division on the attitudes of children and young people.</p> |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| | <p>For example, the Young Life and Times Survey (2013) reported that twenty-six percent of young people said that they rarely or never socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community. Further, seventy-eight per cent of young people also felt that religion will always make a difference to the way people feel about each other here.</p> <p>In addition, the development of the policy has been informed by the fact that our education system largely reflects traditional divides in society. 92.6% of children and young people here attend either Catholic maintained schools or schools that are either state controlled or voluntary and that are mainly attended by Protestant children and young people.</p> <p>There is an extensive body of international research regarding the effectiveness of collaboration between different types of schools in divided societies.</p> |
| <p>Racial Group</p> | <p>Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children from differing Section 75 groups, including children from different racial backgrounds to learn together at school and in less formal education.</p> <p>Policy development has in part been informed by the increasing diversity of the school population in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>During recent years, schools here have been experiencing a steady growth in their enrolment of children from various parts of the world. The number of Newcomer pupils has increased from 1,366 in 2001/2 to 10,356 in 2013/14.</p> |
| <p>Age</p> | <p>It is intended that all children and young people will have the opportunity to learn together through Shared Education. This will include Early Years, Primary, Post Primary and the Youth Sector</p> |
| <p>Marital Status</p> | <p>Marital status is not a consideration in the development and application of this policy.</p> |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <p>Sexual Orientation</p> | <p>It is intended that all children and young people will have the opportunity to learn together through Shared Education.</p> <p>In seeking to promote good relations, equality of identity and respect for diversity the policy will positively impact on sexual orientation.</p> <p>Representatives of LGB&T communities have raised the issue of the designation of schools as public authorities under Section 75 – the absence of which they argue has a disproportionate impact on LGB&T young people.</p> |
| <p>Men And Women Generally</p> | <p>It is intended that all children and young people will have the opportunity to learn together through Shared Education. This will promote equality of identity and respect for diversity.</p> |
| <p>Disability</p> | <p>, Shared Education is designed to promote opportunities for enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and educational support centres,</p> <p>Development of this policy is informed by a wide evidence base highlighting the benefits of inclusion for children with SEN.</p> <p>An example of key local evidence on the benefits of collaboration includes the ETI ‘Guide to Collaborative Practice’, which is based on learning from twenty four special schools that worked collaboratively on a joint curriculum project of their choosing with a neighbouring mainstream school. This guidance sets out the key elements arising from these projects which support and encourage collaborative working. It provides a template, alongside a synopsis of the case study projects, to all schools and Area Learning Communities to use to build their capacity to respond more effectively to a wider range of pupils needs through collaborative working.</p> |
| <p>Dependants</p> | <p>It is intended that all children and young people will have the opportunity to learn together through Shared Education. This will promote equality of identity</p> |

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| | and respect for diversity. |
|--|----------------------------|

2.2 Taking into account the evidence gathered at 2.1 what are the needs, experiences and priorities of each of the categories in relation to this particular policy

| Section 75 category | Needs/Experiences/Uptake/Priorities |
|-------------------------|--|
| Religious Belief | <p>The aim of the Shared Education policy is to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. These are important priorities for all Section 75 categories.</p> |
| Political Opinion | |
| Racial Group | |
| Age | |
| Marital Status | |
| Sexual Orientation | |
| Men And Women Generally | |
| Disability | |
| Dependants | |

3. SCREENING QUESTIONS

3.1 What is the likely impact of this policy on equality of opportunity for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

*No negative impact

| Section 75 category | None | Minor | Major | Details of policy impact Level of impact? |
|-------------------------|------|-------|-------|---|
| Religious belief | ✓ | | | |
| Political opinion | ✓ | | | |
| Racial group | ✓ | | | |
| Age | ✓ | | | |
| Marital status | ✓ | | | |
| Sexual Orientation | ✓ | | | |
| Men and women generally | ✓ | | | |
| Disability | ✓ | | | |
| Dependants | ✓ | | | |

3.2 Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

| Section 75 category | NO | Yes | Provide Details |
|---------------------|----|-----|---|
| Religious belief | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.</p> <p>Against the background of a segregated education system, Shared Education is a crucial way to break down barriers and improve community relations.</p> |
| Political opinion | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together</p> <p>Against the background of a segregated education system, Shared Education is a crucial way to break down barriers and improve community relations.</p> |
| Racial group | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children and young people from differing Section 75 groups (including those from different racial backgrounds</p> |
| Age | ✓ | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Marital status | ✓ | | |
| Sexual Orientation | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children and young people from differing Section 75 groups (including those of differing sexual orientation)</p> |
| Men and women generally | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children and young people from differing Section 75 groups (including gender)</p> |
| Disability | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children and young people from differing Section 75 groups (e.g. including those with and without disabilities)</p> |
| Dependants | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children from differing Section 75 groups (including children who are carers or school age mothers)</p> |

3.3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between: people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

| Good relations category | No impact | Minor impact | Major impact | Details of policy impact |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Religious belief | ✓ | | | |
| Political opinion | ✓ | | | |
| Racial group | ✓ | | | |

3.4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

| Good relations category | NO* | YES* | Provide Details |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|---|
| Religious belief | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.</p> <p>Against the background of a segregated education system, Shared Education is a crucial way to break down barriers and improve community relations.</p> |
| Political opinion | | ✓ | <p>Shared Education promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.</p> <p>Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community</p> |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|---|--|
| | | | backgrounds to learn together. Against the background of a segregated education system, Shared Education is a crucial way to break down barriers and improve community relations. |
| Racial group | | ✓ | Shared Education promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion. |

3.5 Additional considerations - Multiple identities

Please provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities and specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

4. SCREENING DECISION

Not to conduct an equality impact assessment because no equality issues have been identified.

Please provide details which support the decision

Shared Education is specifically intended to increase equality of opportunity and good relations. Consequently, no adverse equality issues have been identified.

Shared Education is the organisation and delivery of education so that it:

- Meets the needs of, and provides for the education together of learners from all Section 75 categories and socio-economic status;
- Involves schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance arrangements; and
- Delivers educational benefits to learners, promotes the efficient and effective use of resources, and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Shared Education involves the provision of opportunities for children and young people from different community backgrounds to learn together.

It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children from differing Section 75 groups (e.g. children from different racial backgrounds, children with and without disabilities, children who are carers or school age mothers) and from differing socio-economic backgrounds to learn together at school and in less formal education.

The Department of Education has published [consultation proposals](#) on the Shared Education Policy and accompanying Shared Education Bill. The Consultation will last until Friday 6 March 2015.

5. TIMETABLING AND PRIORITISING

5.1 If the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

| Criterion | Priority Rating |
|--|------------------------|
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations | |
| Social need | |
| Effect on people’s daily lives | |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions | |
| Total | |

Details of the Department’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable will be included in a Quarterly Screening Report.

5.2 If the policy is affected by timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities please provide details

6. MITIGATION

If you conclude that the likely impact is ‘**minor**’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you should consider: mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Why and how will the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

7. MONITORING

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Please detail what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy on any of Section 75 equality categories.

A series of outcome measures have been agreed for monitoring and evaluation purposes. These include specific measure on attitudinal change and reconciliation. Additionally the Education and Training Inspectorate will be engaged to evaluate shared education partnerships.

Where schools and other educational institutions are in receipt of a Shared Education funding, the Education and Training Inspectorate will explicitly review the use of that funding in its inspection reports.

The Chief Inspector's Report, which is published biennially, will make specific comment on the current range and extent of Shared Education activities across the education sector, highlight good practice and make recommendations regarding how these could be extended and improved.

Additional information will be collated from a number of surveys. A series of questions have been developed and are included in the schools omnibus survey. This is completed by the head of the school annually and the available information used to setup baseline data. It will continue to be run on a yearly basis to access the numbers etc involved in sharing in education.

DE contributes questions to the Young Life and Times Annual Survey. At present shared education questions will be included every 2 years to measure the increase in sharing in education partnerships over the next few years. These questions focus on the experiences of 16 year old young people.

8. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

8.1 Please state if the policy/decision in any way discourages persons with disabilities from participating in public life or fails to promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

No - the policy aims to encourage and facilitate collaborative working across educational providers, on a cross sectoral basis and will be equally applied to pupils with or without any form of disability.

8.2 Please state if there is an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities or encourage participation in public life by making changes to the policy/decision or introducing additional measures.

Yes –It is expected that Shared Education will be organised and delivered in such a way that promotes equality of opportunity and social inclusion by providing opportunities for children with and without disabilities to learn together at school and in less formal education. Notably, Shared Education will provide opportunities for enhanced collaboration between mainstream schools, special schools and educational support centres

8.3 Please detail what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy with reference to the disability duties.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will be engaged to evaluate shared education partnerships.

Where schools and other educational institutions are in receipt of a Shared Education funding, the Education and Training Inspectorate will explicitly review the use of that funding in its inspection reports.

9 CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

9.1 How does the policy/decision affect anyone’s Human Rights?

I.E.

The Human Rights Act (1998)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

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

| | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Positive Impact | ✓ |
| Negative Impact (human right interfered with or restricted) | |
| Neutral Impact | |

9.2 If you have identified a negative impact who is affected and how?

At this stage you should determine whether to seek legal advice and to refer to the issue to the Equality Team to consider:

- *whether there is a law which allows you to interfere with or restrict rights*
- *whether this interference or restriction is necessary and proportionate*
- *what action would be required to reduce the level of interference or restriction).*

9.3 Outline any actions which could be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or to ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy/decision.

10 CONSIDERATION OF RURAL IMPACTS

10.1 Is there potentially a direct, or indirect, impact on rural areas?

| | |
|-----|---|
| YES | |
| NO | ✓ |

Guidance on Rural Impact Assessment can be found in [Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing](#)

**10.2 If YES please attach a DARD Rural Issues Statement Pro-forma
(A Pro-forma can be found in TRIM Document DE1/14/117152)**

11. APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------|
| Screened By: | Position | Date |
| Suzanne Kingon | DP, Shared Education and Community Relations Team | 01/10/14 |
| Approved BY: | Position | Date |
| Andrew Bell | G7, Shared Education and Community Relations Team | 01/10/14 |

Note: A copy of the Screening Form must be approved and 'signed off' by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Quality Assured by: | Edith Preston | Date:4/2/2015 |
| Screening Decision | Agreed | |
| Placed on Internet by: | _____ | Date: _____ |
| Consultees Informed by | _____ | Date: _____ |