



Department of  
**Education**

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY SCREENING**

**FOR ADDRESSING BULLYING IN SCHOOLS POLICY**

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Revised June 2014

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# 1. POLICY SCOPING

## 1.1 Title of policy

Addressing Bullying in Schools

## 1.2 Type of Policy Development

This is a new policy extending previous legislative requirements on schools to address bullying behaviour among their pupils.

## 1.3 Description of policy

The aim of this policy is: **To provide a common definition of bullying and facilitate and promote a more cohesive and uniform approach to addressing bullying; both inside individual schools and between all schools in the north of Ireland.**

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Provide a common definition of bullying;
- Place a requirement on all grant-aided schools to centrally record complaints of bullying and the actions taken by the school in addressing each complaint; and
- Place a requirement on each Board of Governors (**BoG**) to identify and designate one or more members with responsibility for anti-bullying policies and processes within its school.

The intended outcomes of the policy are:

- By creating a clear legislative framework, to ensure greater consistency in the identification, classification and treatment of incidents of bullying by all schools;
- Through standardised recording and collection of information on bullying incidents;
  - Create an evidence base which will better inform consistent operational decision making within schools;
  - Create an evidence base on the overall scale and motivating factors behind bullying behaviour to inform future policy development;
- By building knowledge and expertise within all BoG, to promote the increased use of best-practice in school policy making and operational practice;
- To enable schools to respond effectively to incidents of bullying, resolving problems effectively and to the satisfaction of all parties involved ; and
- By enabling pro-active identification and tackling of common causes of bullying, to decrease the number of incidents of bullying occurring with schools.

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

None	
Legislative	✓
Financial	✓
Others please specify)	✓

**Others:** Schools will retain their current operational freedom for school discipline matters. If a number of schools choose not to recognise and classify incidents as 'bullying behaviour', (*to avoid any administrative burden or a perceived negative reflection on the school*) the value of the resultant central data pool will be weakened. Schools will, however, then be liable, should their actions be challenged in civil court proceedings and be found to in breach of the legislation.

**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

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

The Department of Education (DE)

## (b) Implementing it

DE, Education Arms Length Bodies, Schools, School Principals and Boards of Governors

## (c) Explain the relationship?

DE establishes and monitors the policy. It will also implement a number of the key actions through provision of policy, guidance and analysis of recorded statistics. Other actions will fall to Education and Library Boards (or single Education Authority) for implementation. On the ground school principals and Boards of Governors will be responsible for the implementation of the policy and the recording of incidents of bullying.

## 1.7 Other policies or objectives with a bearing on this policy

**Addressing Bullying in Schools** policy has been particularly informed by the Report of the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum's (NIABF's) ***Review and Recommendations of anti-bullying legislation, existing guidance to schools, policies and practices within schools and support provided to schools by the ELB's*** (December 2013), ***The Nature and extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in the North of Ireland*** (October 2011) and ***World Health Organisation's collaborative cross-national survey Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children in 2010*** (2010).

**Addressing Bullying in Schools** sits within a broader education policy framework aimed at promoting discipline and good behaviour within schools. This framework is set out within ***"Pastoral care in schools: Promoting positive behaviour (2001)"*** which provides guidance for schools in the development and of their policies and procedures surrounding the way pupils behave in schools. It reflects strategies and examples of good practice to help promote and maintain positive behaviour in schools.

Also of relevance is the NIABF's guidance ***"Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour, (2013)"*** which was issued to every school in the north in 2013 and which illustrates current best practice in responding to all aspects of this problem.

## 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
Religious Belief	<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>The Nature and Extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in the north of Ireland report(2011) reported that more Year 6 pupils from 'Neither' Protestant or Roman Catholic Communities (43.8%) and 'Other' religious communities (49.5%) reported that they had <i>'been bullied at school in the past couple of months'</i> than pupils from the Roman Catholic (35.3%) and Protestant (39.7%) communities. Although lower levels of bullying were reported by Year 9 pupils by religion, a similar pattern is evident. More pupils from 'Neither' Protestant or Roman Catholic Communities(36.2%) and 'Other' religious communities (34.0%) reported that they had <i>'been bullied at school in the past couple of months'</i> than pupils from the Roman Catholic (27.5%) and Protestant (29.5%) communities.</p> <p>There is an extensive body of international research regarding the levels of bullying worldwide and the effectiveness of different approaches to bullying in schools.</p>
Political Opinion	<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. The Nature and Extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in the north of Ireland report (2011) details the continuing negative impact of bullying on religious and political grounds.</p> <p>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>Racial Group</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>The Nature and Extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in the north of Ireland report (2011) reported 6.9% of Year 6 pupils and 4.1% of Year 9 pupils admitted bullying other pupils <i>‘with mean names or comments about his or her race or colour’</i>. Also, 14.0% of Year 6 and 7.6% of Year 9 pupils indicated that they had been bullied <i>‘with mean names or comments about my race or colour’</i>.</p>
<p>Age</p>	
<p>Marital Status</p>	<p>Due to their age, Marital status of pupils is not a consideration in the development and application of this policy.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>Results from the Year 9 pupil survey show that: ‘I was bullied with mean names, comments or rude gestures with a sexual meaning’ was the sixth most common form of bullying experienced by around 14% of pupils (about 16% of boys and 12% of girls). This was also the fifth most common type of bullying perpetrated by 6% of Year 9 pupils (9% of boys and 3% of girls). Almost 4% of Year 9 pupils (over 5% of girls and just under 2% of boys) had ‘received a message with unwanted sexual suggestions, jokes or threats’ and almost 5% (almost 4% of girls and over 6% of boys) had ‘received a message with insults calling me gay (whether true or not)’. Just over 1% of Year 9 pupils bullied other pupils in the following ways: -‘I sent him or her a message with unwanted sexual suggestions, jokes or threats’ and over 2% ‘I sent him or her a message with insults calling him or her gay (whether true or not).’ There was little difference between responses for boys and girls. (Note: Year 6 pupils were not asked these questions).</p> <p>The Schools Omnibus Survey OF 2014 highlighted that, of those surveyed, 39.3%</p>

	<p>had seen or heard derogatory references to same sex relationships in the classroom or school grounds once or twice per year, 17.3% had seen or heard derogatory references to same sex relationships in the classroom or school grounds once or twice per term, 5.1% had seen or heard derogatory references to same sex relationships in the classroom or school grounds once or twice per week and 1.4% had seen or heard derogatory references to same sex relationships in the classroom or school grounds nearly every day.</p>
<p>Men And Women Generally</p>	<p>The Nature and Extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in the north of Ireland report (2011) reported that 11.4% of female pupils and 13.1% of male pupils had been bullied in the past couple of months with mean names or comments about their religion.</p> <p>In the Institute for Conflict Research report 'Grasping the Nettle (February 2014) stated that 'young trans people face numerous educational inequalities that act as barriers to them fulfilling their full potential. However, in comparison with other minority groups, the experiences of transgender pupils are least likely to be reflected in data and research (EHRC 2010).'</p>
<p>Disability</p>	<p>The Nature and Extent of Pupil Bullying in Schools in the north of Ireland report (2011) reported that Year 6 and Year 9 pupils with a disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• were more likely to report that they have been recipients of bullying behaviour at least '<i>once or twice</i>';</li> <li>• had some experience of being bullied verbally regarding their disability (34.0% of Year 6 and over 40% of Year 9 at least '<i>once or twice</i>'); although most of these (23.6% of Year 6 and 25.3% of Year 9) had been bullied '<i>with mean names or comments about my disability</i>' only once or twice;</li> <li>• had bullied other pupils more often than pupils who recorded that they did not have a disability (27.1% of Year 6 pupils and 29.1% of Year 9 pupils with a disability perpetrated bullying compared to 20.8% of Year 6 pupils and 20.5% of Year 9 pupils without);</li> <li>• tended to bully other pupils '<i>with mean names or comments about his or her disability</i>' more frequently than pupils who did not record that they had a disability.</li> </ul>



Dependants	Literature has shown that peer pressure (possibly leading to bullying) can be one of the underlying reasons for non-attendance amongst young people in care. <a href="http://www.deni.gov.uk/rb1_2011.pdf">http://www.deni.gov.uk/rb1_2011.pdf</a>
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**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?**

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Needs/Experiences/Uptake/Priorities</b>
Religious Belief	Bullying because of actual or perceived Religious belief of the victim occurs in schools but there is no evidence that the needs, experiences, uptake and priorities of the victims in relation to this policy will vary according to Section 75 Category
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?

Section 75 category	None	Minor	Major	Details of policy impact Level of impact?
Religious belief		✓		<p>This policy will have a minor <b>positive impact</b> for all pupils who are the victims of bullying irrespective of their Section 75 category as the intended outcomes of the policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By creating a clear legislative framework, to ensure greater consistency in the identification, classification and treatment of incidents of bullying by all schools;</li> <li>• Through standardised recording and collection of information on bullying incidents;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create an evidence base which will better inform consistent operational decision making within schools;</li> <li>○ Create an evidence base on the overall scale and motivating factors behind bullying behaviour to inform future policy development;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• By building knowledge and expertise within all BoG, to promote the increased use of best-practice in school policy making and operational practice;</li> <li>• To enable schools to respond effectively to incidents of bullying, resolving problems effectively and to the satisfaction of all parties involved ; and</li> <li>• By enabling pro-active identification and tackling of common causes of bullying, to decrease the number of incidents of bullying occurring with schools.</li> </ul>
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		✓	Addressing Bullying in Schools policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.
Political opinion		✓	
Racial group		✓	
Age		✓	
Marital status	✓		
Sexual Orientation		✓	
Men and women generally		✓	
Disability		✓	
Dependants		✓	

**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?**

<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Minor impact</b>	<b>Major impact</b>	<b>Details of policy impact</b>
Religious belief		✓		The intended outcome is to Addressing Bullying in Schools policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.
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?**

<b>Good relations category</b>	<b>NO*</b>	<b>YES*</b>	<b>Provide Details</b>
Religious belief		✓	Addressing Bullying in Schools policy is specifically intended to promote equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.  Against the background of a segregated education system, Addressing Bullying in Schools policy is a crucial way to break down barriers and improve community relations.
Political opinion		✓	
Racial group		✓	

**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.**

[Empty response box]

## 4. SCREENING DECISION

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

Please provide details which support the decision

Addressing Bullying in Schools policy 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 and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.

Addressing Bullying in Schools policy is specifically intended to increase equality of opportunity and good relations. Consequently, this policy will have a positive impact and no adverse equality issues have been identified.

**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.

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

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.**

The policy has at its core the monitoring of incidents of bullying to develop effective practice.

**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.**

**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 policy has at its core the monitoring of incidents of bullying to develop effective practice.

**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 \(CEDAW\)](#)

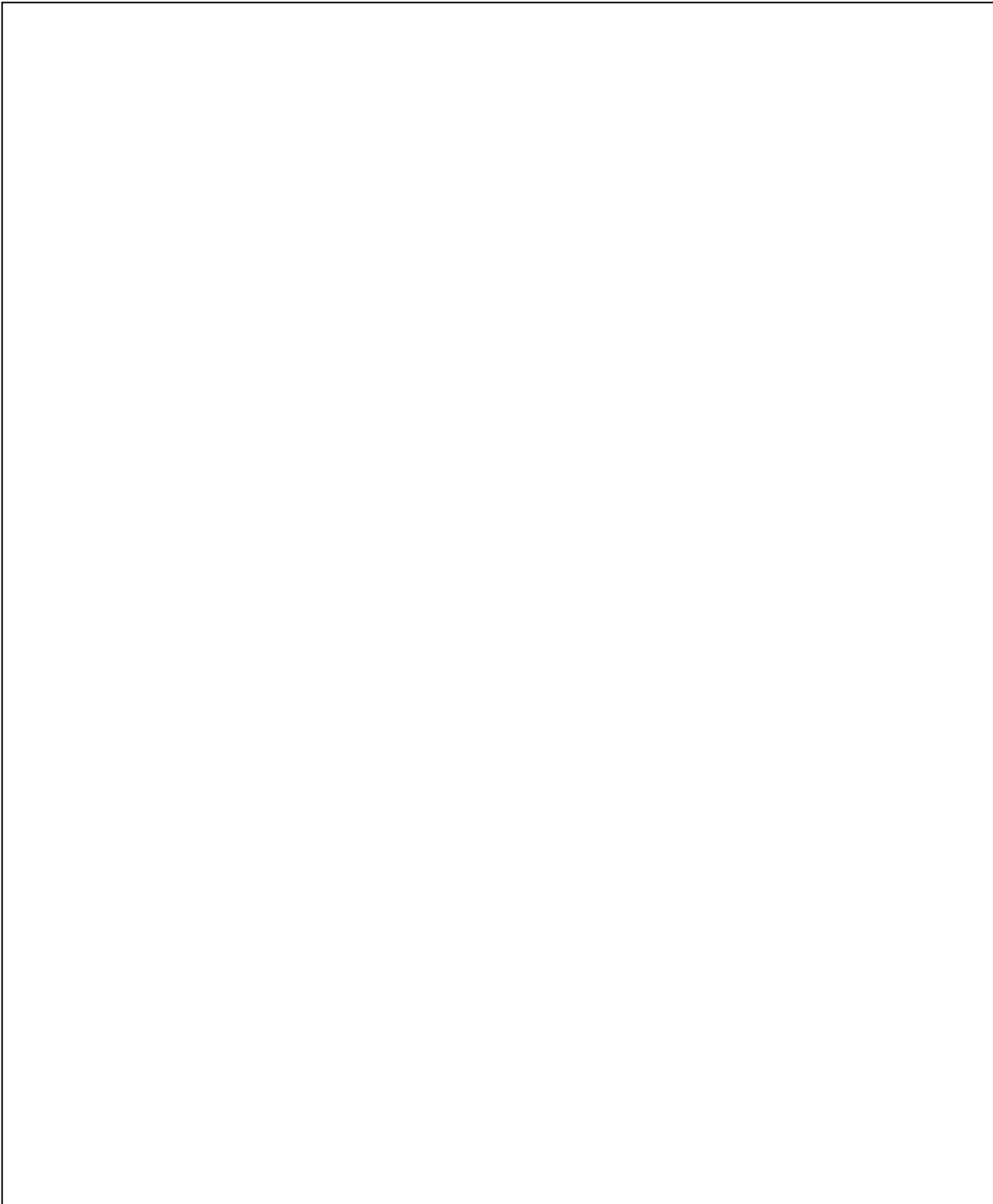
Positive Impact	✓
Negative Impact (human right interfered with or restricted)	
Neutral Impact	

**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	✓

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
Gareth Dillon	SO, Pupil Behaviour Management Team	01/12/14
Approved BY:	Position	Date
Alan Boyd	G7, Pupil Behaviour Management Team	01/12/14

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

The **TRIM** version of the completed Screening Form must be sent to the Equality Team (equality@deni.gov.uk) for quality assurance.

### FOR COMPLETION BY EQUALITY TEAM

Quality Assured by: Richard Magowan Date: 31/12/14

Screening Decision Agreed

Date Directorate/Team Informed: 31/12/14

If your decision was to "Screen Out":

1 As soon as possible following quality assurance you must publish a copy of the screening form on the Department's website, with a link on the "Policy Screening" page

Placed on Internet by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2 You must tell the Equality Team once your screening is published so it can fulfil the Department's statutory obligation to inform the Department Consultees when and where the screening was published

Consultees Informed by \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3 You must store this completed screening form on TRIM and finalise it. Use the record naming convention "Completed Screening form of....."