Equality, Inclusion and Community Cohesion

An audit tool for Governors

This document is part of a toolkit to support schools to implement the requirements of equality legislation. The toolkit also contains:

- An overview of the toolkit. It would be helpful to read this first as it explains how the toolkit came about and the purpose of the different parts of the toolkit
- A briefing for senior staff and governors
- A framework for a Single Equality Scheme (SES)

- Answers to a set of FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions
- A flowchart to develop a SES
- A summary of equality legislation

Why should governors use this audit?

The governing body is legally responsible for ensuring that a school meets their duties encompassed within equality legislation.

This audit tool will support governing bodies to

- identify the progress that their school has already made, and further action that their school intends to take, to promote equality, inclusion and community cohesion
- support senior staff to drive forward equality, inclusion and community cohesion, and thereby help raise standards and achieve key outcomes, such as Every Child Matters and personalised learning
- meet their duties in respect of equality legislation

How can governors use this audit tool?

There are **two sections** in this audit tool. The **first contains the top 10 questions** that governors should explore with senior staff. The **second** section contains further questions that governors may want to explore to obtain a deeper understanding of school progress in equality, inclusion and community cohesion.

The questions in this audit are not intended to be prescriptive but to help stimulate reflection, discussion and debate.

The first column to the right of the questions permits governors to record key indicators against which progress can be measured. The second column can be used to identify a red, amber or green 'flag', indicating governors' confidence or concern, and to note any agreed actions. The audit tool does not need to be completed in one session.

Section One – the top 10 questions to explore	Key indicators against which progress can be measured	Flag for action		
		red	amber	green
1. Are **governors aware of their legal duties** under equality legislation? For example, have all governors been trained in the equality duties? (see the toolkit's summary of equality legislation for schools for further information)				
2. Do governors **monitor applications and expressions of interest in the role of a governor**, in relation to gender, disability and ethnicity? Does the **governing body reflect the full diversity** of the school and the local community? If not, what actions have and will governors take to help address under-representation?				
3. Has **a governor been nominated** from the governing body to take the **lead in championing** equality, inclusion and community cohesion?				
4. Have Governors **seen and agreed the school's 3-year Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan** (or a separate three-year race equality policy and action plan, disability equality scheme and action plan, accessibility plan, gender equality scheme and action plan, and an equal opportunities policy that covers age, sexual orientation and religion and belief)?				
5. Have governors **agreed arrangements to monitor the implementation** of the Single Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan (or separate policies, schemes and plans) to assess its impact on staff, learners and parents? For example, is there a standing item on committee and whole governing body agendas?				

Section One – the top 10 questions to explore	Key indicators against which progress can be measured	Flag for action		
		red	amber	green
6. Do governors receive regular reports that monitor equality and diversity, for example reports monitoring: • achievement rates, disaggregated ethnicity, gender and disability? • learners' participation and success in wider educational and social experiences? For example, participation in school trips or extracurricular clubs and activities by disabled pupils? • inclusion such as admissions, attendance, behaviour, disciplinary, sanctions and exclusions, and participation in learner voice activities, by ethnicity, gender and disability? • staff recruitment, career progress and retention by disability, gender and ethnicity? Are strategies in place to help address any equality gaps? Does the school need to gather further information to monitor policy and practice in relation to equality, inclusion and community cohesion?				
7. Are there **well-known and clear school-wide procedures** for dealing with, and reporting, issues and incidents of discrimination and harassment, including • homophobia? • Racism? • Sexism? • issues and incidents on the grounds of disability, learning difficulty or religion? Do governors receive a report of these incidents?				

Section One – the top 10 questions to explore	Key indicators against which progress can be measured	Flag for action		
		red	amber	green
8. Are governors clear on **what will change and how practice will improve in three years time** in relation to equality, inclusion and community cohesion? Have governors identified milestones and targets against which progress can be monitored?				
9. Is **equality and diversity embedded throughout the school evaluation form (SEF)?** For example, • in section 2, on how the full diversity of learners' views are gathered and acted upon, including disabled learners, those from ethnic communities and hard to reach groups? • in section 3, comparing achievement and standards of different groups such as males and females, ethnic communities and disabled learners? • in section 4, on any issues of bullying on the grounds of religion, race or sexual or homophobic incidents, and how learners' rights and responsibilities are developed? • in section 5, on the support for disabled learners or learners with EAL needs? • in section 6 on how leadership and management monitor the impact of the school's equality and diversity policies in relation to all groups of learners?				
10. Does the school **recognise and celebrate events** important to people from diverse backgrounds, such as Black History Month, Christmas, EID, Holocaust Memorial Day? What other events, exhibitions and displays take place to help celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion?				

Section Two – further questions to explore	Key indicators against which progress can be measured	Flag for action		
		red	amber	green
How do governors ensure that all staff understand their duties to implement equality legislation in their day-to-day responsibilities?				
Have governors checked that the school Single Equality Scheme (or separate equality policies, schemes and action plans) follow the Hampshire County Council framework for a Single Equality Scheme? Are there any sections that have not been adequately addressed? For example: (numbers in brackets refer to sections in the HCC framework)				
• are governors aware of the vision and values that have informed the Scheme? (1)				
• Do governors know the 'diversity make-up' of the school (3). For example, do governors know how many disabled pupils attend the school? Have governors asked senior staff to explain, if this is below 7% of the school population?				
• Has the school carried out a broad range of involvement activities with a diversity of staff, pupils and parents, including, for example, disabled people and those from ethnic communities? (4) • Is there a link between issues identified by above activities and priorities set by the school in the Scheme? (4)				
• Are governors aware of areas where the school has made the most, and the least progress in promoting equality, inclusion and community cohesion? Do priorities in the Scheme concentrate on areas of least progress? (6 & 13)				

Section Two – further questions to explore	Key indicators against which progress can be measured	Flag for action		
		red	amber	green
• Do governors refuse to accept a new policy unless an equality impact assessment has been carried out? (7)				
• Are governors clear on their own roles and responsibilities in supporting senior staff to implement the Scheme? (12)				
• Will the priorities and actions in the school Equality Action Plan help the school to work towards all six elements of the Disability Equality Duty, all three elements of the Race Equality Duty and both elements of the Gender Equality Duty? (13) • Have priorities been identified to promote community cohesion, and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, sexual orientation and religion and belief? (13) • Is the Scheme available on the school website? Have all governors received a copy of the Scheme? Has a summary been made available to pupils, staff and other interested stakeholders? (9) • Is the Equality Action Plan (13) embedded within the School Improvement Plan or other plan overseen by governors (10)? • Is there a system in place for governors to receive and discuss the school's annual report on equality, inclusion and community cohesion? (10)				

Section Two – further questions to explore	Key indicators against which progress can be measured	Flag for action		
		red	amber	green
How do governors support the head teacher and senior staff to raise awareness of the Single Equality Scheme (or separate policies, schemes and plans), and to challenge those who don't aspire to the same outcomes?				
Do governors receive regular reports that monitor how the school is meeting its duties to parents, carers and other people who use the school or may want to, for example disabled people or people whose first language is not English?				
Does curriculum planning across all subject areas identify opportunities to celebrate diversity and to explore and discuss issues of equality? For example, have ways been identified to link citizenship education with other subjects?				

Write here any school specific questions for governors to explore with senior staff				