



Education Resources

Equality Statement of Commitment

September 2013





Education Resources

Equality Statement of Commitment

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Education Resources
- 1.2 About the Council

2.0 Aims and values

- 2.2 National policy links
- 2.4 South Lanarkshire policy links

3.0 Leadership and management

- 3.1 Responsibilities
 - 3.1.1 Responsibilities of the Education Authority
 - 3.1.2 Responsibilities of the Heads of Establishment and Service Managers
 - 3.1.3 Responsibilities of individual employees
 - 3.1.4 Responsibilities of Equality Co-ordinators
 - 3.1.5 Responsibilities of visitors and contractors

4.0 Implementing the specific duties

- 4.2 Equality Outcomes
- 4.3 Arrangements for assessing the impact of the activities of the authority
- 4.4 Publishing the results of monitoring and reporting on progress
- 4.5 Gathering and using employee information
- 4.6 Publishing gender pay gap information and statement on equal pay.

5.0 Putting the Equality Statement of Commitment into practice

- 5.1 How we will put the Statement of Commitment into practice
- 5.2 How we will use training and development
- 5.3 How we will publish and promote the Statement of Commitment

6.0 Date of Statement of Commitment

7.0 References



Education Resources

Equality Statement of Commitment

1.0 Background

1.1 *Education Resources*

1.1.1 South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources is committed to upholding and promoting legislation as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. The Act extends legislative protection to nine protected characteristics: age, race, disability, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and places duties on local authorities related to these protected characteristics. One is the General Duty which states that we must have due regard to the need

- to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not and;
- to foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not;

For information and guidance on the protected characteristics:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/education-providers-schools-guidance/protected-characteristics/>

It should be noted that age, marriage and civil partnership are **not** protected characteristics for the schools provision. They should, however, be taken into account for other services in Education.

For information and guidance on the provisions of the Act in relation to schools:

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/EqualityAct/PSED/technical_guidance_schools_scotland_final_5_.docx

A comprehensive Glossary of terms relating to equality can be found at:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/equal-rights-equal-respect/useful-information/glossary/index.html>

1.1.2 Education Resources in South Lanarkshire is responsible for the education of approximately 40,000 school aged children and young people (2011). It also provides a range of learning opportunities for adults and young people within communities.

Education is now delivered through 17 learning communities/areas which promote the education, health and social welfare of young people and adults in the area served by the learning community/area, through joint working with other agencies such as Social Work Resources and NHS Lanarkshire. This better integrated working creates and supports an inclusive approach to meeting the needs of all.

To support learners Education Resources also provides the following services:

- Psychological Services
- Services to support English as an additional language and bilingualism
- Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service where there is a focus on areas such as citizenship, equal opportunities, education for enterprise and personal, social and health development
- Community Learning and Home School Partnership Service
- Youth Learning
- Support Services
- School Modernisation
- Learning Community Teams
- Inclusive Education Service
- Integrating Children's Services

1.2 *About the Council*

1.2.1 The Single Equality Scheme for South Lanarkshire Council, which is also required under the Equality Act, commits that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. This does not simply mean treating everybody the same as clearly we are all different and have different needs. It is about being fair and providing the opportunity to everyone to participate and be active in our community.

1.2.2 The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) has been given specific responsibility for directing the development and implementation of the Council's revised Equal Opportunities Policy, and our Single Equality Scheme. The Executive Director (Education Resources) is responsible for ensuring that the Equal Opportunities Policy, the Single Equality Scheme and this Statement of Commitment are taken into account in planning, delivering and monitoring the effectiveness of education services. The Director is assisted in this by the Education Management Team, Heads of Establishment, Services Managers, Quality Improvement Officers and Equality Co-ordinators.

2.0 **Aims and values**

2.1 South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources recognise that every person has the right to be treated fairly, regardless of protected characteristic. We believe that equality for all is a basic human right and actively oppose all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination. We address the needs of people who have traditionally faced discrimination or received less favourable treatment, ensuring that everyone is treated fairly, recognising additional support needs, understanding differences and promoting a positive ethos.

Our approach to celebrating and supporting diversity is demonstrated in our day-to-day work and our commitment to providing high quality education that is accessible to all. We ensure that all within establishments work in an open, supportive environment where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential and understand the values and benefits of equality and diversity. We aim to ensure that everyone is treated with equity. We seek to integrate equality into everything we do including leadership and development, ensuring that equality principles are part of the planning processes. We promote inclusion and working with the wider community to encourage good practice and equal opportunities. Equality is not simply a minority issue. It is important to everyone.

2.2 'Connect' sets out the Council's vision to improve the quality of life for all within South Lanarkshire. For Education Resources this means delivering services of the highest quality as well as targeting to support the most vulnerable families in our communities. It is about continually improving the services for everyone at the same time as giving priority to children, young people, families and communities in most need. Our aim is to improve the experiences and outcomes for children, young people and adults as they participate in learning or make use of the wide range of services within Education.

2.3 *National policy links*

- 2.3.1 We are committed to ensuring the principles of 'Getting it Right for Every Child' are embedded within every establishment. We recognise the right for all children to be; safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included, and actively work towards this. Getting it Right for Every Child is an approach which helps support inclusion.
- 2.3.2 *Curriculum for Excellence* challenges us to achieve the aspiration to enable all learners to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society. It provides an important impetus to achieving our vision for children, young people and adult learners, that they should be valued by being safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
- 2.3.3 The Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships (CPP) on Community Learning and Development (CLD) sets out the expectations for CPPs in relation to public sector reform (<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/2208/0>). The outcomes required are:
1. improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship;
 2. stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.

The Guidance states that CLD is essential in delivering the equalities agenda and has a core role, ensuring all partners involved in CLD are included.

Duties have been placed on local authorities to deliver CLD through Regulations attached to the Education Scotland Act (1980). This legislation is supported by the Strategic Guidance and provides further clarification of the Government's expectations of local authorities.

2.4 *South Lanarkshire policy links*

- 2.4.1 Connect is the Council's key planning document. It is closely linked to the Community Planning Partnership's agreement, the Single Outcome Agreement. The Council's vision is to work together to improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire. The relevant values are:
- Fair and open,
 - People focused,
 - Working with and respecting others,
 - Excellent employer,
 - Accountable,
 - Effective and efficient and self aware and improving

The relevant Council objectives are:

- Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults
- Tackle disadvantage and deprivation
- Get it right for every child
- Increase involvement in lifelong learning.

For further information:

http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6971/connect_council_plan_2012-2017

2.4.2 South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources has produced six core policies covering all aspects of educational provision for children, young people and adults. The policies have been produced with the aim of ensuring equality of opportunity for all and through a process of consultation with stakeholders.

For further information visit

http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/34/education_resources_policy_statements

2.4.3 All new and existing policies are audited as part of our impact assessment process in addition to our ongoing, well developed, self evaluation systems.

2.4.4 Equality is an improvement priority for Education Resources and guidance is issued annually.

3.0 Leadership and management

3.1 Responsibilities

3.1.1 Responsibilities of the Education Authority

The education authority is responsible for:

- Having due regard to the need to:
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not; and
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- making sure this Equality Statement of Commitment and its procedures are followed;
- making sure that services, schools and establishments under its management make arrangements to assess the impact of its policies using the South Lanarkshire Impact Assessment processes;
- making sure that services, schools and establishments involve those with protected characteristics in the planning and implementation of service delivery, and monitor and report on the effects of policies and practices; and
- making sure that services, schools and establishments comply with the Equality Act 2010.

3.1.2 Responsibilities of Heads of Establishment and Service Managers

The head of each establishment and service manager is responsible for:

- actively tackling the harassment and victimisation of those with protected characteristics, challenging discrimination and promoting equal opportunities, good relations and positive attitudes
- making sure the Education Resources and the Establishment Equality Statement of Commitment are readily available to all stakeholders
- making sure the Equality Statement of Commitment and its procedures are followed and all stakeholders are regularly updated
- taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination, monitoring, recording and reporting on cases of harassment and discrimination
- ensuring health and safety procedures and undertaking risk assessments where appropriate in connection with groups with protected characteristics.
- ensuring Equality Coordinators are trained and supported in developing policy.
- ensuring information is produced in alternative languages or formats where requested.

3.1.3 Responsibilities of individual employees

All employees are responsible for:

- promoting equal opportunities and avoiding and challenging discrimination
- promoting positive attitudes towards equality, including working with children, young people, families, adults and learning communities to promote equality.
- keeping up to date with the law on discrimination, and taking up training and learning opportunities
- dealing with incidents of harassment and being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- recording and reporting on cases of harassment and discrimination
- taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions, by adhering to established safe working systems and avoiding taking actions that could create unnecessary health and safety issues particularly in relation to groups with protected characteristics.

3.1.4 Responsibilities of Equality Co-ordinators

There is a named Equality Co-ordinator identified in each educational establishment and service to promote equalities. The role includes the following:

- leading and promoting equality initiatives and sharing positive practice
- disseminating best practice, current information and resources
- assisting establishments and services to report on progress relating to equalities matters
- attending specialist meetings
- cascading employee development and training
- assessing the appropriateness of current resources
- providing feedback for, and contributing to, the Education Equal Opportunities Advisory Group.

3.1.5 Responsibilities of visitors and contractors

South Lanarkshire Council procurement procedures ensure that each contractor is responsible for:

- knowing and following the South Lanarkshire Council Single Equality Scheme and the Education Resources Equality Statement of Commitment.
- confirming that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, it has complied with the Act and Statutory Instruments, or their EU equivalent and agrees to continue to comply with them in a manner which is proportionate and relevant to the nature of the Contract.

Heads of establishments and services ensure that visitors comply with the South Lanarkshire Council Equality Scheme and the Education Resources Equality Statement of Commitment.

4.0 Implementing the specific duties

4.1 On 27 May 2012 the Equality Act 2010 (Specific duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 came into effect. The specific duties are the practical means of implementation for the Council in relation to equalities and place the following requirements on all public authorities

- a duty to report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty– action to embed equality across corporate systems, policies and practices.
- a duty to publish equality outcomes and report progress – a set of outcomes which it considers will enable it to better perform the equality duty.
- a duty to assess and review policies and practices – where and to the extent necessary to fulfil the equality duty. This duty states that authorities must consider relevant evidence and publish the results of any assessments.
- a duty to gather and use employee information.
- a duty on to publish gender pay gap information.

- a duty to publish statements on equal pay.
- a duty to consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement - where an authority proposes to enter into a relevant agreement on the basis of an offer which is the most economically advantageous, it must have regard to whether the award criteria should include considerations to enable it to better perform the equality duty.
- a duty to publish in a manner that is accessible.
- a duty to consider other matters – as specified from time to time by Scottish Ministers.

4.2 *Equality Outcomes*

4.2.1 The duty to publish equality outcomes is seen as a shift from 'objectives' to produce practical and measurable changes in the life chances of those who experience prejudice, discrimination and disadvantage.

Improvements in job opportunities for those who are disabled, or provision of accessible information to improve service uptake, are examples where increase can be measured. The Government wants authorities to respond to the needs of their local communities and therefore they will have to be informed by involvement of local equality groups in the process. Whilst there will not be a requirement to have outcomes for all protected characteristics, there will be a requirement to evidence why this is the case.

The cycle of reporting to the community on what our outcomes are will start on 30 April 2013 and will recur every 2 years. Education Resources will have to review its outcomes no later than every 4 years as of that date, in line with the cycle of reporting relating to the Council Plan Connect and the Education Resources Plan.

4.2.2 Education Resources has considered the requirement to publish equality outcomes and, in partnership with other Resources has contributed to Corporate Equality Outcomes. Equality Coordinators were consulted in February 2013 and the following equality outcomes are proposed:

- Increased involvement in lifelong learning for men, minority ethnic people, people with disabilities, LGBT young people, pregnant young women, and between people of different ages. Increased levels of achievement for these groups through community capacity building
- Maintained or increased percentage of boys, young people with disabilities and minority ethnic young people with a positive destination on leaving school.
- Improved standards of achievement and attainment for boys, learners with disabilities and minority ethnic learners in relation to overall attainment.

4.3 *Arrangements for assessing the impact of the activities of the authority*

4.3.1 In relation to equality impact assessment, there will not be a national standard and as such it will remain with authorities to decide how to conduct these. Assessments will need to cover all protected groups, be informed by evidence, and the duty will apply to all new policies, practices, services and provision, including changes or redesign of existing policies, practices, services and provision.

Education Resources headline and service priorities are closely linked to Council and national priorities. Links are reviewed and made explicit in the Resources Plan which sets out the targets for our services for the coming year. These are included in Learning Community Improvement Plans and Establishment and Service Improvement Plans.

Each establishment and service is responsible for auditing and monitoring their functions, policies and procedures. Establishments and services should consider the need for impact assessment when establishing a new policy or reviewing existing ones.

4.3.2 South Lanarkshire Council has developed Impact Assessment processes. These, along with Child at the Centre 2; How Good is Our School? 3; How Good is Our Community Learning and Development? 2; and the Guides to Self-evaluation series from Education Scotland allow us to:

- build equality impact assessment into all policy development and planning processes
- incorporate equality targets into strategic plans and local improvement objectives as part of the service planning process
- consult a wide spectrum of the school community and the wider community in our policy and planning processes
- assess the impact of our Statement of Commitment and other policies.
- support schools, establishments and services in effective monitoring and self evaluation of their own position statement and help them to identify good practice in promoting equality of opportunity.

Aspects of promoting equality continue to feature as an improvement priority for all sectors in the Education Resources Plan.

4.3.3 As part of the impact assessment process, we consult a variety of groups, including those affected by the policies. Policies and guidelines will be chosen for consultation based on our assessment for relevance. All relevant policies and guidelines will then be presented to a number of forums and individuals representing different communities for their views and comments. The purpose of consultation is to see how the policies may affect people from those different groups, and to discuss their impact on the elimination of discrimination and the promotion of equality and positive attitudes.

4.3.4 Among the groups that we consult with are the Equal Opportunities Forum, the Disabled Employee Forum, the Working Parent and Carers Forum and the South Lanarkshire Partnership. Where appropriate, we will also consult communities, parent councils and pupil councils of schools, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), the trade unions, the Burning Issues Participation and Advocacy Network (BIPAN) and the Youth Council, in order to meet our communities needs more effectively. We will focus particularly on vulnerable members of our community for, example looked after children.

4.3.5 Methods of consultation include written questionnaires, focus groups and consultation events. To avoid overburdening any particular community group, we liaise with other local service providers in carrying out consultation. Services use methods such as electronic voting, or the Appreciative Enquiry Method of participation to encourage the positive involvement of users with disabilities.

4.3.6 Individual establishments or services will involve employees, parents/carers, children, young people and other service users through their formal and informal mechanisms such as parent council meetings, local community groups and individuals in the wider community.

4.3.7 Where adverse impact is found, where impact is insufficient or the consultation indicates a policy conflicts with our general duties, under the Equalities legislation, the matter will be referred to senior managers, as appropriate, for action. This will be included in the report(s) on the impact assessment.

4.3.8 A summary of the results of the impact assessment, which will contain information on the consultation will be made available via Council media mechanisms e.g. newsletter, website, intranet.

4.4 *Publishing the results of monitoring and reporting on progress*

- 4.4.1 Information on data monitoring appears in Council and committee reports and is presented on a regular basis to the Equal Opportunities Forum for further dissemination to representative groups.
- 4.4.2 Progress on improvement priorities is reported publicly through the Education Progress report. This will include reporting and equality outcomes in future.
- 4.4.3 Information on Equality Opportunities legislation appears on the Council's website enabling public access and the intranet enabling Education Resources' establishments and services to access relevant and updated information. South Lanarkshire's Glow site, which is part of the Scottish national intranet for education can also allow pupils, teaching staff and parents/carers access to information.
- 4.4.4 The regular publication of the Education Resources Newsletter and the Council publication 'The Works' magazine disseminates information to all establishments and services.
- 4.4.5 Our Communication and Consultation policy states that account is taken of the needs of the audience by making information available when required in other formats. This is also an important aspect of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009. In order to fulfil our duty to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate unlawful discrimination, we are continually actively seeking ways of making access to information easier.

4.5 *Gathering and using employee information*

Data collected from Equal Opportunities monitoring and employee data verification exercises assist in the evaluation of effectiveness of council policies.

The Council carries out an analysis of the composition of the Workforce on annual basis and the results of this exercise will be used to measure the effectiveness of the Equal Opportunities Policy and to develop appropriate positive action programmes.

- 4.6 *Publishing gender pay gap information and statement on equal pay*
Finance and Corporate Resources publish details on an annual basis.

5.0 Putting the Equality Statement of Commitment into practice

5.1 *How we will put the Statement of Commitment into practice*

The Education Resources Plan is our principal planning document is well structured, and designed to be a useful working document for councillors, central employees and employees in establishments and services. It includes a clear and comprehensive overview of Council and national priorities for education. Initiatives supporting Inclusion and Equality feature as an Improvement Priority for all establishments and services.

5.2 *How we will use training and development*

- 5.2.1 Training will be provided to ensure that our duties under the new Equalities legislation can be carried out effectively. We will continue to provide training through, for example, our head teacher meetings, equality co-ordinators meetings and meetings of service managers in monitoring, assessing policies for adverse impact, following procedures for dealing with harassment and use of self-evaluation performance indicators e.g. How Good Is Our School? QI 5.6.
- 5.2.2 Education Resources offers a wide range of development opportunities which deal directly with equality issues.

5.2.3 Meetings are held annually for equality co-ordinators from each establishment and include briefings and training on aspects of the growing equality agenda.

5.3 *How we will publish and promote the Statement of Commitment*

5.3.1 A wide range of approaches is used to publicise and promote the statement including the South Lanarkshire Council website
<http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk>

5.3.2 Any breaches of the statement will be referred through the Council's usual procedures.

6.0 Date of Statement of Commitment

6.1 This Equality Statement of Commitment has been formally agreed and published by South Lanarkshire Council following consultation. Thereafter the Statement of Commitment will be reviewed every four years. During the period covered by the statement (2013-17) information will be gathered to monitor the effectiveness of the statement and annual reports will be prepared.

7.0 References

- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications>
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Education Scotland: Child at the Centre 2
- Education Scotland: How Good is our School? 3
- Education Scotland: How Good Is Our Community Learning and Development? 2
- Education Scotland: : Guides to self-evaluation series
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk>
- Getting it Right for Every Child
<http://www.girfecinlanarkshire.co.uk/>
- South Lanarkshire Council: Equal Opportunities Policy
- South Lanarkshire Council Single Equality Scheme
- South Lanarkshire Council Plan: Connect 2012-2017
- South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources Plan 2012/13
- South Lanarkshire Council Youth Strategy
- South Lanarkshire Council Community Learning and Development Strategy
- South Lanarkshire's GLOW site
- Education Resources Newsletters
- South Lanarkshire Council: The Works Magazine
<http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/>

Further information

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

Phone: 01698 454545; Email: education@southlanarkshire.gov.uk