

Report

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Report to:	Education Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	24 April 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources)

Subject:	Equality and Inclusion Update
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ provide an update on the developments around the Equality and Inclusion agenda within Education Resources.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of this report be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. Equality and Inclusion is a key policy within Education Resources. It ensures that the actions of the Council meet the legislative requirements of a number of Acts passed by Government to make certain that children and young people with additional support needs and disabilities are able to participate fully in educational activities and enjoy all aspects of their time in school and nursery.
- 3.2. South Lanarkshire Education Resources has been developing practice in Equality and Inclusion since the advent of the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004. This practice is rooted in the resolve to make South Lanarkshire schools and establishments welcoming and accessible for all children.
- 3.3. A key aspect of Inclusion and Equality is that all children should have the chance to be educated within their community. In particular, the Scottish Government has re-emphasised the “presumption to mainstream” which was initially set out in the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000. This presumption to mainstream sets out that as far as possible, children should be educated together in mainstream schools to foster a sense of belonging within communities and break down the barriers to prejudice.
- 3.4. The focus of our development work has been on ensuring that inclusion and equality continues to be at the heart of our work in our schools, services and throughout Education Resources. This is demonstrated by a shared belief that all learners should be included and treated equally.

4. Recent Developments

- 4.1. The good practice that has developed over the last number of years has been collated and set out within a new resource for schools, establishments and partners. This resource is called the “Framework for Inclusion and Equality”.
- 4.2. The Framework is a large binder with a series of chapters covering all principal aspects of Inclusion and Equality within education. It gives clear and straightforward advice to heads of establishments on subjects such as Staged Intervention; which is a graded approach to meeting additional support needs in all establishments. It covers key aspects of practice such as solution oriented meetings, partnership working and the use of “How Good is Our School 4” to monitor the quality of Inclusion within establishments.
- 4.3. The Framework is available in hard copy and also as a digital version on the Intranet and the Government’s Glow website. Copies have been made available in the Members’ Areas. It includes thirty “Practice Guides” on a variety of subjects that have been identified as areas in which heads have often required support and advice in order to make correct choices around managing situations. The aim of having the Framework in a digital version is to ensure that new topics and practice guides can be created so that all establishments across our Council area work to the same key principles.
- 4.4. The Framework was launched in March 2018 and has been greeted with enthusiasm by practitioners and also by partner agencies who can use the information in the Framework to understand the way Education Resources will approach issues and situations.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. Now that there is an easily accessible resource in which the most appropriate and up to date advice can be stored for heads, managers and practitioners, there has already been a request for Inclusive Education Service to produce further practice guides on other subjects related to Inclusion and Equality. The Framework was designed to be an evolving resource which can respond to new initiatives and changes in Government policy.
- 5.2. A key guide, which will be developed over the next few months and will sit within the Framework, is one which reflects the Government’s code of practice on information sharing. This is to be outlined in the forthcoming Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill which will make its way through Parliament in the next few months.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. None

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. None

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. There are no significant risk implications in terms of the information contained within this report.
- 8.2. There are no implications for sustainability in terms of the information contained within this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 9.2. The views of stakeholders have helped to shape and influence the development of the “Framework for Inclusion and Equality” resource pack and on how it should be made available in hard copy format and also accessible electronically.

Tony McDaid
Executive Director (Education Resources)

4 April 2018

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- Ensure schools and other places of learning are inspirational

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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