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Part of the BSA Group

Index toolkit

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Preface

This toolkit, based on the INDEX (Inclusion and Diversity Excellence) Framework, provides structure and guidance to promote the values of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and seeks to assist schools to be more effective and thus provide a better service as both an educational establishment and an employer. Since the first edition of this toolkit in 2020, schools have done a lot of work on EDI and will now be at different stages in their journey. While this toolkit may seem daunting, it provides a range of suggested activities. They are by no means an exhaustive list but will be helpful to get schools started and to audit their current provision. The 'Specific areas of concern' section is based on the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Age, pregnancy and maternity and marriage have not been included as they tend to be areas of concern for staff and HR teams rather than pupils. Inclusive school communities which foster a sense of belonging will also have an impact on other areas such as staff retention, admissions, and emotional wellbeing. Progress against the INDEX toolkit is intended to be reviewed using the evaluation section of this tool. This should be done regularly to ensure consistent efforts in upholding high standards of EDI within each setting.

Contents

1. Framework

Statement of Intent	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
Commit to provide an equal opportunities policy. Make direct reference to equity, which supports pupils and staff with protected characteristics. This is supported by legislation.	-Check reference document for relevant legislation to inform the development of this policy.			
Commit to building a school culture that firmly embeds equity, diversity, and inclusion – thereby creating a sense of belonging where every member of the school community feels valued.	-Foster positive and trusting relationships. -Empathetic and compassionate leaders. -Seek out opportunities to recognise student and staff achievements. -Where possible make collaborative decisions and work as a team.			
Prioritise the development of best practice for INDEX. Include it in the school's development plan and budget. Demonstrate the school's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion making them central to decision making and used to drive change.	-Include EDI initiatives in the school's development plan and budget.			
Empower staff and pupils to create change.	-Utilise student and staff voices through ideation sessions, assemblies, governor			

Leadership	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
	meetings, lessons and staff meetings etc.			
Appoint a Designated Inclusion Governor	-Appropriate training through BSA/AGBIS			
Embed best practice whereby the Head and SLT members take the lead with this work.	-Provide continual learning opportunities for all.			
Appoint a dedicated and passionate Inclusion Lead who is provided with appropriate support, training, budget, and time. This could be an SLT member or someone reporting to SLT.	-Provide and encourage Inclusion Lead to join an EDI support network. -EDI as standing agenda item for relevant meetings. -Audit current EDI provision. -Develop an action plan which will be regularly updated and reflects staff and student voice. -Report progress to the Governors termly as a matter of routine.			
Create an INDEX working group which meets regularly to identify and plan specific actions.	-Identify EDI champions across the school.			
Appoint a pupil Inclusion Lead or team. This could be a member of the senior prefect team or school council.	-Where possible, this should be made up of a diverse range of pupils. -Pupil Lead(s) to meet with EDI lead regularly. -Make EDI a standing item on the school council agenda.			

			When	Who
Include INDEX matters as part of the staff development process / best practice.	-Form tutors leading discussions, staff development opportunities, utilising teachable moments etc.			

School Environment	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
Create an inclusive culture and environment in which all staff and pupils can positively engage, develop their self-confidence, and feel comfortable to use their voice.	-Demonstrate compassion and open-mindedness -Engage with Empathy week, embed these principles into daily school practice.			
Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and of the behaviours expected through training and consistent messaging.	-Include school's commitment to EDI in job descriptions and contracts. -Encourage staff commitment to EDI through regular communication with SLT and during staff meetings. -Establish clear common goals and language amongst the staff body. -Monitor rigorous implementation of school policies.			
To create and promote safe spaces in school for staff and Pupils.	-Create ally groups. -Support Prefects to co-ordinate activities for pupils. -Signpost dedicated quiet spaces.			

Displays around school representing diverse backgrounds, cultures, religions, beliefs etc.	Refer to specific areas of concern section.			
Ensure all trips and events align with the school's values and ethos around EDI.	To be included in risk assessment and trip planning form.			
School website to clearly reflect ethos and stance on EDI.	-Consider wording of mission statement, imagery, messaging, and availability of relevant policies. -Consider accessibility of school website for people with impairments and learning disabilities.			
Communications with home to include and celebrate diversity and reflect inclusive culture of the school.	-Consider newsletters, social media posts, prospectus etc.			

Training	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
All staff and governors to receive regular, up-to-date training on all aspects of EDI. Training should not be tokenistic. It should inspire enthusiasm and a desire to learn more and support those with protected characteristics in the school community.	This is not an exhaustive list of suggestions. -EDI update at start of every term and whenever a significant change/event occurs. -Anti-bias training. -Reading lists for staff. -Racial literacy training. -SEND update at the start of every term. -SEND training on most common diagnoses within school and about those with disabilities. -LGBT+ training. -HR and SLT staff to have training on bias with regards to protected characteristics. -Prejudice and discrimination training. -Supportive conversations training. This could include restorative justice approaches.			

Practice	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
Create opportunities for staff and pupils to discuss views and ideas. This should be within a respectful, constructive, and professional environment in which challenging and robust conversations are integral.	-To have a regular EDI newsletter to share best practice, upcoming events, and suggested reading.			
All staff to be role models for ally and non-discriminatory behaviour by demonstrating empathy and respect for all. Actively foster a culture of acceptance for pupils who come from different backgrounds or have protected characteristics.	-Use inclusive language, including pronouns. -Avoid perpetuating stereotypes. -Celebrate all pupils, their backgrounds, and differences.			
Create opportunities for a wide range of pupils to access the school by actively seeking to diversify the school community.	-Provide transformational /100% bursaries. -Foster community partnerships. - Consider involvement with Royal National Children's Springboard Foundation. -Invite the wider community to open evenings and school events.			

	-Establish a support programme for those pupils and focus on belonging.			
Apply relevant policies and procedures to EDI related concerns and complaints. Ensure absolute clarity that any issue brought forward in good faith will be taken seriously.	This will be specific to each school and their policies.			
Consider behaviours of staff and pupils with an EDI lens for example taking into account cultural norms and acknowledging bias. Foster a non-judgemental and accepting culture where staff pupils feel comfortable to be themselves.	-Provide anti bias training. -Take time to understand the cultural and neurodiverse needs of staff and pupils. -Refer to specific areas of concern section.			
Commit to reflection upon and learning from both internal and external matters.	-Hold a 'lessons learnt meeting' after an incident/complaint.			
Establish a Pupil INDEX working group to discuss current issues.	Include EDI discussion points in clubs such as debating or current affairs.			
Run a programme of EDI focused sessions for parents to foster understanding and discussion. This might be a standalone event or as part of existing school events such as parent evenings and open days etc.	This is not an exhaustive list: -How to understand and celebrate the school community. -Inform parents about policies, procedures, and relevant legislation. -Specific training on the needs of the school community. -Share the school ethos and vision.			

Consider carefully and develop good relationships with the local community in respect of INDEX matters.	-Create opportunities for diverse community members and parents to participate in school life e.g. Authors, People who help us, community events and celebrations.			

Policies	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
Develop an INDEX/Inclusion policy which is compliant with the law and reflective of best practice and ethos.	-Check reference document for relevant legislation to inform the development of this policy.			
Review all policies and guidance with an 'INDEX lens' and ensure clarity, consistency, and practical feasibility of delivery.	-Review complaints policy, anti-bullying policy, behaviour policy and equal opportunities policy. -Include aftercare for all involved in any incident/complaint. These procedures could include further education, talking with school counsellor, access to supportive resources e.g., books, emotional literacy opportunities/ groups check-ins with staff, or student and parents.			
Introduce and maintain an incident log of discriminatory behaviour for both staff and pupils.	-Anti-bullying log to track discriminatory offences with regard to protected characteristics.			

	-Use data from incident records to plan training and interventions. -Application of low-level concerns policy for staff if appropriate.			

Teaching and Learning	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
Commit to creating an inclusive and diverse curriculum by reviewing schemes of work at a departmental level and identify whole school and cross-curricular opportunities.	This is not an exhaustive list: -Challenge stereotypes and misconceptions and encourage discussion. -Inclusive language, i.e., not automatically referring to a doctor as 'he'. -Review reading lists. -Evaluate resources and textbooks. -Celebrate a range of religious holidays. -Review images used in teaching materials to ensure content is appropriate and doesn't perpetuate negative stereotypes. -Use examples with a wide representation of genders, relationships, backgrounds, neurodiversity, and disability. -Differentiation for children with SEND: scaffolding,			

| | | executive function skills, fine motor skills and emotional regulation etc
-Assessment practices reflecting children's needs and allowing them to achieve best outcomes.
-Opportunities for children to share their experiences/learning in a safe space.
-Identify important figures for all subjects from different backgrounds.
-Proactively plan 'teachable moments' in respect to EDI matters, i.e., meaning behind texts or origin of experiments/concepts/objects etc. | | |

Recruitment	Suggestions	Evidence and action points	When	Who
Commit to promote equal opportunities in all aspects of recruitment.	-Review wording and messaging on school websites and candidate information packs to reflect school ethos. -Ensure equal opportunities policy refers to equity.			
Check wording of job adverts for unintended bias.	-Use an online tool to analyse language used in advert.			
Develop a realistic action plan and set intentions for maintaining or increasing diversity and inclusion in school staff and governors.	-Advertise vacancies across a range of platforms to ensure diverse talent sourcing. -This could include: community networks, teaching pools, employment websites, LinkedIn, local communities.			
Review the recruitment process to ensure candidates feel comfortable and welcome at every stage of the application and interview process.	-Consider interview panels in terms of representation and candidates. -Proactively ask about reasonable adjustments ahead of interviews. -SLT to undertake anti-bias training.			

2. **Specific areas of concern**

Race and culture	Suggestions	Evidence and action points
	-Anti-racism and racial bias training.	
	-Audit of resources and curriculum.	
	-Review and update relevant policies.	
	-Range of diversity of displays.	
	-To be aware of the care, time, and requirements necessary to look after Black and textured hair types in boarding and a variety of settings etc: provision for time taken to do hair, products needed, size of swim caps or protective wear.	
	-A range of sport activities which allow children from a range of cultures, backgrounds, and experiences to participate.	
	-To have a range of diverse literature within the school that represents people of colour and their experiences. This should include positive experiences.	
	-Plan in advance for teachable moments to foster positive conversation around race and culture e.g., representations in early 20th century literature.	
	-Actively celebrate all pupils of colour.	
	Inclusive messaging on website and in all communications e.g., school newsletter.	

	-Integrate the message of Black history month all year round, highlight a positive, joyful Black experience when celebrating Blackness. -Pupil-led assemblies and events. -SLT, Headship and positions of authority in school to reflect a balance of varied ethnic groups.	

Special Educational Needs and Disability	Suggestions	Evidence and action points
	-Review and update accessibility plan regularly. -A range of sport activities which allow children from a range of needs and ability to participate. -Be aware of each child's sensory needs and hypersensitivities. -Consider accessibility when planning trips off site. -Having dedicated quiet spaces or sensory areas for children to regulate. -Create opportunities to actively celebrate all SEND pupils. -Inclusive messaging on website and in all communications e.g., school newsletter. -Celebrate Disability month and integrating this message all year round. -A range of books and resources that are in accessible format inclusive and representative of SEND stories and experiences. -Pupil-led assemblies and events. -SEND ally group. -The use of assistive technology where appropriate.	

	-The use of additional communication aids where necessary such as sign language, hearing loop, Makaton etc. -Having a fully integrated SEND team. -Regular inspection and updating of accessibility equipment. -Personal emergency evacuation plans for pupils with reduced mobility.	

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity	Suggestions	Evidence and action points
	- School displays that represent, celebrate and normalise LGBT+ people as part of society and the school community. -Inclusive messaging on website and in all communications e.g., school newsletter. -Celebrate Pride and integrating this message all year round. -A range of books and resources that are inclusive and representative of LGBT+ stories and experiences. -Pupil-led assemblies and events. -LGBT+ ally group. -Review all policies to address transphobia and homophobia. Ensure the wording is inclusive and respectful of how LGBT+ pupils would like to be identified. -Ensure all practice is inclusive of LGBT+ pupils e.g., proactively considering the needs of trans pupils on residential trips. - For staff, all should use their preferred pronouns. Where appropriate and in accordance with school policies and	

	legislation, staff and pupils should use a pupil's preferred pronouns. -Where possible, remove the gendered constraints of uniform and sports kit to support LGBT+ pupils and staff. -Keeping the child's best interest at the centre of the conversation around gender identity. -PSHE and RSE represent a range of relationships and identities.	

Sexism	Suggestions	Evidence and action points
	-Celebrate inspirational women across a range of disciplines to create role models. -Develop strategies to support girls into choosing STEM. -Ensure the literature and resources in schools present a range of female experiences that empower girls to create their own narrative. -Invite inspiring female business leaders to encourage girls to enter the sector. -Actively challenge stereotypical norms around masculinity and femininity. -A range of sports and opportunities available to both boys and girls which do not fall into the usual stereotypical norms. -A balance of male and female representation in positions of authority in school such as SLT and Headship. -Suitable clean toilets and sanitary provision for periods.	

Religion and beliefs	Suggestions	Evidence and action points
	-To be aware of and allow choice over sports and uniform attire in line with religious and cultural dress. -To have a celebrations calendar with cultural events and festivals all year round. -To provide quiet reflective spaces in school to accommodate the needs of varying religious practices. Make pupils aware of these spaces and train pupils to respect them. -Always have dietary options available for children required to observe particular diets. This should be planned in advance for events and trips. Children should not feel that they are an inconvenience. -Staff should be aware of religious practices such as children fasting and those whose families are fasting during Ramadan. Staff should be aware of the impact of fasting on concentration and tiredness. Other considerations may be hunger pangs, headaches, ability to participate in sports and other physical activities etc.	

	-Teach all to be respectful to others' religious and beliefs systems. -Ensure there is no proselytising within the school community.	

3. **Evaluation**

Statement of Intent	
Leadership	
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4. References

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