

National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education

Supplementary Schools

Promoting Equal Opportunities, valuing diversity and contributing to Community Cohesion

It is widely acknowledged that supplementary/complementary schools can have a positive contribution to:

- *raising achievement,*
- *engaging parents in school and learning,*
- *keeping students safe and positively involved,*
- *supporting the national curriculum,*
- *providing language teaching and exam success,*
- *reinforcing positive identities.*

However, the positive role supplementary/complementary schools have in Promoting Equal Opportunities, and contributing to Community Cohesion is not something that is emphasized nearly enough. Supplementary schools have long played an important role in easing the integration of communities, particularly those newly arrived in the UK.

Community Cohesion policies, as defined by the government's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit in 2005, aim to build communities in which all people from different backgrounds and circumstances;

- *have a common vision and a sense of belonging*
- *value diversity*
- *are offered similar life opportunities*
- *experience strong and positive relationships - in workplaces, at schools and within neighbourhoods.*

The work of supplementary schools presents a further opportunity to create links between communities and facilitate cross-community events and projects.

There is a plethora of laws, policies and procedures to help promote equality of opportunity, community cohesion and valuing diversity. However, many of these are aimed at public bodies.

NRC Quality Framework demands supplementary schools not just have an Equal Opportunity Policy, but to implement and review it regularly.

Some Do's and Dont's For Schools

DO	DON'T
<p>Equal Opportunity Policy is not for decoration. Make sure your staff, MC members, parents and students are aware of it. Review it every year Incorporate EOP into your school's Code of Conduct</p> <p>Have robust, but fair procedures in tackling those who contravene your EOP</p> <p>Make sure you use materials and resources that are suitable for children living in the UK, a multi cultural, multi racial country. Adapt materials and resources shipped from your country of origin. Make them suitable.</p> <p>Make sure children from different backgrounds at your school mix together. Encourage learning of each other's culture</p> <p>Tackle citizenship issues in assemblies. Have regular visiting speakers from LA's and other agencies</p> <p>Celebrate your history and achievements</p> <p>Forge good partnership with local mainstream schools. Encourage them to facilitate your schools to take part in their celebratory events. Offer them help in tackling challenging cultural issues</p> <p>Consider 'twinning' with a supplementary or/and mainstream school. Have regular joint activities, exchanges</p> <p>Know your local community. Find out about different supplementary schools and discuss how you can work together. Get involved in important local bodies, e.g youth panels, CVSs, LA Safeguarding Boards, etc.</p>	<p>Don't be afraid of challenging those who contravenes the EOP, school code of conduct and other policies promoting EOP</p> <p>Don't shy away from discussing difficult, awkward issues.</p> <p>Don't make assumptions. Investigate complaints properly, using your complaints procedures. Get help if you are not sure how</p> <p>Make sure your celebrations are inclusive. Do not have any elements which could exclude certain section of your school community</p> <p>Don't use overtly nationalistic, chauvinistic educational materials and resources.</p>

List of Useful links

QFW Equal Opportunity Policy Template, DFE, etc.