

Equality Issues in Education:

A resource for Strategic
Equality Plans and Equality
Objectives in schools and
local authorities



WLGA • CLILC

Introduction

Human Rights, as established by the United Nations, have underpinned the UK and Welsh Governments work in drafting the Equality Act 2010 and the specific public sector duties in Wales. In the context of this guide Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a key point of principle. Article 28 'recognize[s] the right of the child to education[...] on the basis of equal opportunity'.

local authorities and individual schools are each required to develop and publish Equality Objectives and a Strategic Equality Plan by **2nd April 2012**. The purpose of the objectives and plans is to enable the delivery of measurable equality outcomes which improve the lives of individuals and communities.

The structure of Strategic Equality Plans

The EHRC have produced guidance outlining what needs to be included in Strategic Equality Plans (SEPs). This is available from http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/Wales/PSED_Wales_docs/2_equality_objectives_and_seps_bk.doc

SEPs must include equality objectives and demonstrate what the local authority or school will do to achieve them. They must also demonstrate that the local authority or school collects relevant information and evidence on which to base its decisions. The plan is also required to outline processes for monitoring progress and assessing the impact of proposals.

This guide is primarily concerned with providing some relevant information and a model which schools can use as a basis for setting objectives. It does not offer a template for an SEP. Monitoring arrangements will need to be tailored to local needs. The third document in this pack, *Common Equality Risks in Education*, provides useful information for assessing impact.

Education contributions to local authority Strategic Equality Plans

Your authority will be developing corporate equality objectives and an authority-wide Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). These objectives will tackle known issues (identified by research and engagement exercises) covering the full range of council services. They could include elements which are relevant to schools or education departments. For example they may include something which your department or school has raised as a priority or something which has been identified elsewhere but which may be relevant to your service or school. The SEP may specify activities which your department or school are required to carry out. The easiest way to manage these is usually by including them in your service plan alongside your other activities.

In addition to the Council's authority-wide Strategic Equality Plan a separate Strategic Equality Plan is required for each school. As much as possible this should link in with your school Development or Improvement Plan. They can be published together or even as a single document provided all of the relevant criteria are met.

Service Level Equality Objectives

Education departments may also wish to include specific education equality objectives in their service plan or similar document. These could be a means of planning activities as a department, but may also include some of the common issues identified in schools' Strategic Equality Plans.

Strategic Equality Plans for schools

Under the regulations schools are required to comply with the specific duties including those around equality objectives and Strategic Equality Plans. There is also a need to be proportionate. When considering capacity and resources it makes sense for schools to take direction from authority-wide or even regional research and engagement exercises as well as work which they can do themselves. There is significant scope for common objectives, occurring in a range of individual plans. The model outlined below helps to explain how plans can be based on a variety of information sources.

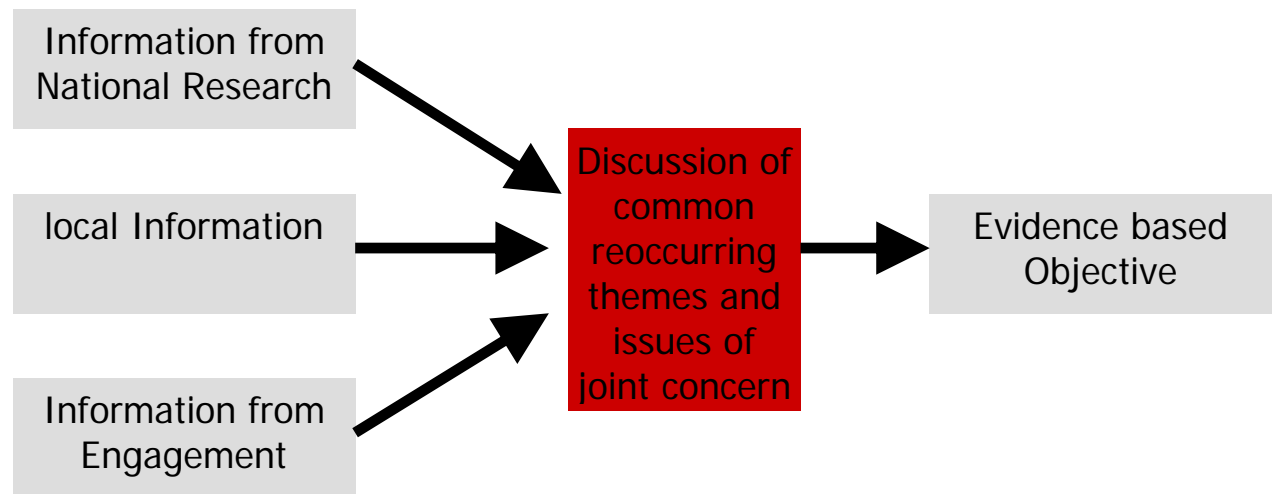
When information and engagement sources have been examined the school will be in a position to set its objectives. At this point it is crucial to remember two things:

1. Although the law has changed equality is not a new area of work
2. Equality work does not stand alone but is part and parcel of other priorities

In the discussion below we have tried to demonstrate how equality objectives link to existing strategies and approaches to inclusion, bullying, behaviour management, improving attainment, pupil voice, wellbeing and pupil support. Schools should seek to build on their existing work and to ensure questions of equality and fairness are considered in the mainstream of activities.

A Model for developing objectives

The following simple model takes into account various requirements of the specific duties.



National Research

National research is important in providing a starting point for identifying inequalities in schools and wider education provision. Primary research is time consuming and resource intensive and tends to be the province of academics, government departments and the larger 3rd sector organisations. Wales and UK research can often be difficult for local education departments and schools to access. Therefore we have focused in this guide in providing a summary of some of the key issues and conclusions of a range of national research in recent years.

Nine key reports were used to provide the summary of inequalities which appear in this guide: the *UK Triennial Review 'How Fair is Britain?'*, the *Wales Triennial Review 'How Fair is Wales?'*, *Equality Issues In Wales: A Research Review*, *All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools*, *Working for a Fairer Future*, *Better Public Services: Plugging the Gaps*, *Who Runs Wales?*, *Young people's experiences of, and solutions to, identity related bullying: Research report* and *An anatomy of economic inequality in Wales* (the Welsh equivalent to the National Equality Panel Report) produced by WISERD on behalf of the EHRC Wales. For further details see appendix 1.

Local Information

Schools and local education departments collect a huge amount of information such as, schools census information, attendance and attainment figures and various records relating to adult learners. Much of this information is useful in answering questions such as 'are the national trends reflected in my school?', but it also needs to consider local issues which may not be recognised nationally.

Information from Engagement

The regulations refer to the need to 'involve people who represent the interests of those who share one or more of the protected characteristics and have an interest in the way that the authority carries out its functions'. In the education context this means talking to children and young people, parents, adult learners, governors, and staff. In some circumstances this could include other groups such as representatives of faith groups or community groups with an interest in a particular school or local education provision more broadly. Engagement should allow these stakeholders to express their own priorities and concerns, which should in turn influence and contribute to the formation of equality objectives. Some groups operate across whole local authorities, whole regions or even nationally. It may be more efficient to gather input from such organisations once and for this information to be disseminated to schools, rather than hundreds of schools individually approaching the same groups with similar questions. Local authorities should consider supporting schools engagement work and disseminating the findings from its own. A list of national groups and resources is included in appendix 2.

Areas not covered by this guide

Substantial differences can be noted in levels of attendance, exclusion and attainment in children eligible for free school meals and those children who are not and in looked after children and those who are not. Schools do a range of specific work with these groups but they are not the focus of this guide. Instead the guide focuses on the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

How to use following section of the guide

1. Read through the issues identified from national research and ask yourself are these issues relevant to my school / local authority?
2. Take inspiration from the national research when considering what local information you would like to have to inform your decisions.
3. Consider what local issues may exist which have not been picked up by the national research.

The national research and existing activities

A convenient way to structure the information from national research is to present the issues and potential problems highlighted in the national research in the context of the existing activities being undertaken by schools, local authorities and the Welsh Government.

Attendance

The *Behaviour and Attending Action Plan 2011 -13* forms the basis for a range of school and local authority activity. Included within this is a significant development in terms of improved attendance analysis. This analysis will inform allocation of bands to schools and the some of the data will be included in schools published information. This improved analysis can be use to inform equality objectives as it will allow schools to identify differences in attendance trends between groups of pupils with different protected characteristics.

The data currently available for attendance of different protected groups is limited. Information is routinely collected for boys and girls but is not generally broken down for other groups. The information suggests similar levels of unauthorised absenteeism for boys and girls.¹

Several reports have been commissioned which examine attendance of Gypsy Traveller and Irish Traveller children. Each found that attendance was lower among these children.² A report for the Welsh Government in 2006 made a distinction between primary education, which had more cultural support in these communities, and secondary education which was less valued.³ More recently the Welsh Government has published an Action and Delivery Plan 'Travelling to a Better Future: Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan' setting out a number of future objectives. These include increasing sense of belonging and acceptance; standards of support for Gypsy and Traveller pupils; reducing the negative effect on schools of Gypsy and Traveller attendance rates; increase number of Gypsy and Traveller pupils; and to reflect Gypsy and Traveller history in school curriculum.

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/publications/equality/110928gypsytravelleren.pdf>

The WG has an All Wales Forum of Gypsy Traveller Education Co-ordinators. This meeting brings together the Co-ordinators from all 22 local authorities to share best practice and to ensure that they are up to date with policy. Forum members can be an invaluable support to schools seeking to improve outcomes for Gypsy and Traveller children. Further information for secondary schools can be found in a recent ESTYN report:

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/download/publication/201883.5/the-education-of-gypsy-traveller-pupils-an-update-on-provision-in-secondary-schools-june-2011/>

Points for consideration:

- **Poor attendance among Gypsy and Irish Traveller Children**
- **The opportunity to improve information on the attendance trends of other groups**

Exclusions

The Welsh Government, local authorities and schools themselves have been conscious of the importance of ensuring equality in relation to exclusions for some time. The key document governing the current approach is the

Exclusion from schools and Pupil Referral Units February 2008.

<http://wales.gov.uk/dcells/publications/publications/guidanceandinformation/exclusionfromschools/exclusionguidance-e.pdf?lang=en>

The guidance contains sections on specific arrangements for excluding pupils with SEN, disabilities and from minority ethnic backgrounds. Subsequently the Race Relations Act 2000 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995, on which the 2008 guidance was based, have been replaced by the Equality Act 2010. The duty upon the school to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations now applies to all protected characteristics Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality, Religion or belief, Sex, and Sexual orientation⁴. Schools now have the opportunity to build on good work carried out in relation to pupils with SEN, disabilities and from minority ethnic backgrounds to ensure all groups are treated fairly in the exclusion processes.

Evidence from national studies suggests that certain groups are more likely than others to be excluded from school. A summary of some of the national studies is reported below, but local authorities and schools will also need to analyse local trends.

Both *How Fair is Britain?* and *How Fair is Wales?* discuss permanent exclusions stating that 'Around three quarters of those permanently excluded [in Britain] were boys.'⁵ Pilgrim 2010⁶ found that 'Four times as many boys as girls are permanently excluded from school [in Wales] and also refers to an inspection report, ESTYN (2005c)⁷, which 'found that a high number of students in PRUs were boys and many had been inappropriately statemented.'

How Fair is Wales? also goes on to say that 'in Wales, 53% of permanent exclusions involved pupils on the SEN register'⁸ and 'that pupils from non-white backgrounds are at least a fifth more likely to be excluded than those from white backgrounds.'⁹

Pilgrim 2010 has also pointed out that in many cases children from Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller backgrounds 'appear to be counted as part of the White population'. This means that the specific needs of Gypsy and Traveller children may not be identified and addressed.

Points for consideration:

- **Boys, pupils with SEN and pupils from non-white backgrounds may be more likely to be excluded**
- **Gypsy and Irish Traveller pupils are often not recognised in monitoring**

Inclusion and Pupil Support

Much of the mainstream work undertaken by schools and local authorities to improve inclusion and pupil support has direct relevance to the equality agenda.

Guiding much of this work is the **Inclusion and Pupil Support Guidance** – which includes the following:

- Presentation of a framework for inclusion to promote access to education for all and remove any barriers to learning.
- Adoption of the term 'Additional Learning Needs' to cover those learners whose needs are greater than the majority of their peers.
- Reflection of recent policy developments, including new arrangements under the Children Act 2004, Learning Pathways 14-19, and the Early and Extending Entitlement agendas.
- Bringing attendance, behaviour and anti-bullying policies together within a whole-school approach.
- More extensive guidance on providing support to pupils with additional learning needs.
- Specific annexes containing additional information such as checklists for inclusive practices.
- New attendance registration codes - previously sent separately to all schools in May 2004.
- The introduction of school-level attendance targets for primary schools and for these to be set on all absences as opposed to unauthorised absences.
- Increased emphasis on improving the level and use of information available on pupils receiving education outside the school setting as well as those pupils moving or joining schools.
- New section on LAs and schools' responsibilities for those pupils who are educated at home by parents.
- New guidance on provision of education for young parents.
- Guidance on new provisions under the Anti Social Behaviour Act, 2003 for Parenting Orders for behaviour problems and Parenting Contracts for poor attendance and behaviour problems.

More detail can be found at the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolhome/pupilsupport/inclusionpupilsupportguidance/?lang=en>

When specific support for individual pupils experiencing problems is required schools counselors can be an invaluable resource. Every secondary school in Wales should now have a school counseling programme in place offering every pupil access to a trained counsellor. The recent *School-based Counselling Facts and Figures* report found that:

- Just over 60% of the episodes of counselling are being delivered to females, with just under 40% delivered to males.
- 97% of the counselling episodes have been delivered to young people from a white ethnic background. With others identifying as mixed race and other ethnic backgrounds; and
- Just over half the young people identified as heterosexual, 2.5% identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual. However the information is missing for around 40% of the episodes of counselling.

More detail can be found at the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/wellbeing/schoolcounselling/?lang=en>

Bullying and Respect

It is important that children and young people are free from bullying and that any bullying behavior is not tolerated within the school. Head teachers and governing bodies must, by law, have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. Challenging bullying effectively will improve the safety and happiness of pupils, show that the school cares and make clear to bullies that such behavior is unacceptable.

Schools and learning settings employ a number of different methods to try and ensure that bullying is irradiated or kept to a minimum. This includes working closely with the pupils in the school and parents.

Since the launch of the *Respecting Others: Anti-Bullying Guidance* 2003 whole school bullying policies have been implemented with specific reference to racial and disability focused bullying and reference to Race relations and Disability legislation. This guidance aims to provide information on tackling bullying in schools. It offers direct practical solutions to both prevention and dealing with incidents of bullying and gives an explanation of the roles of all involved in preventing and dealing with bullying.

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/090119nafwc2303en.pdf>

The introduction of the Equality Act and the extension of protection to a wider range of groups mean that schools are now required to consider a broader range of identity based bullying than was the case back in 2003.

In order to facilitate updates to bullying policies WG have produced new guidance, called *Embedding anti-bullying work in schools in Wales*. This includes:

- Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Sexist, Sexual and Transphobic Bullying
- Cyberbullying
- Bullying around Race, Religion and Culture
- Homophobic Bullying

Further information –

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/111007respectingothersen.pdf>

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/wellbeing/antibullying/?lang=en>

Evidence from national studies suggests that bullying is a significant problem for a range of children in schools throughout Wales. The All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools (WAG 2009) found:

‘There was a difference in the type of bullying boys and girls reported in most of the year groups surveyed. Girls in all year groups were more likely than boys to report indirect forms of bullying, for example having lies or rumours spread about them, and girls in years 6, 7, and 10 were more likely to be bullied through social websites. Boys in years 4 and 7 were more likely to report physical forms of bullying, and boys in years 6, 7, and 10 were more likely to report homophobic bullying.’¹⁰

The survey also provided the following table relating to ‘identity based bullying’.

Table 1 The percentage of pupils in Wales bullied for different reasons within the last two months			
Questions as asked within the survey	Year 6	Year 7	Year 10
I was bullied in a homophobic way, e.g. being called gay as an insult, whether or not it’s true	22%	19%	9%
I was bullied in some way due to my learning difficulties	9%	7%	4%
I was bullied in some way due to my race or ethnic origin	3%	2%	3%

An in-depth study has been carried out for Barnardos in Cardiff which interviewed 77 children and young people. It provides more detail on racist, homophobic and disability related bullying and for the difference in bullying experienced by boy and girls. It also examined broader issues of respect between children and adults including in pupil teacher relationships. One child gave an example of some of the problems which can arise:

‘Teachers abuse power. They bullied me because of my language, my background and my birth place. I’m a Welsh Somali but my teacher said I couldn’t be Welsh and that made me mad...I’m proud of what I am.’

Other examples of research which focused on the views of children themselves include Turner (2003) and Funky Dragon (2007). Turner interviewed disabled children and found a mixture of views but these included

concerns around bullying, being treated differently to non-disabled children and a feeling that teachers did not listen or understand pupils needs.

Funky Dragon (2007) highlighted dissatisfaction with the ways in which schools support religious needs. '45 per cent said these were never taken into account.' School uniform and religious clothing is one area where guidance has been recently revised and reissued by the Welsh Government. This followed a number of legal cases in Wales and England.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/uniform/:jsessionid=I0vSTVZJjXDOqtFg7YTSq2f52yOpgwT7c8Y6Psw4sgSILp1yDhD6!1374374152?lang=en>

The '*How Fair is Britain?*' report has also demonstrated that certain groups are likely to experience high levels of bullying. These include:

- disabled students,
- lesbian, gay and transgender students
- and those from lower socio-economic groups¹¹

Other studies include Williams and Robinson (2007) found high levels of homophobic bullying in Education in Wales. The incidence recorded included bullying based on the sexuality of parents and carers as well as the actual or presumed sexuality of the child. Also a Save the Children Cymru survey of Gypsy Traveller children, undertaken as part of the *National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee (2003) report*, found a very high level of sustained bullying and prejudice.

Points for consideration:

- **Working with the new guidance on:**
 - **Bullying Involving Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**
 - **Sexist, Sexual and Transphobic Bullying**
 - **Cyberbullying**
 - **Bullying around Race, Religion and Culture**
 - **Homophobic Bullying**
- **Different experiences of bullying / differencing needs of Boys and Girls.**
- **Understanding religious needs**

Pupil Participation

Participation is an essential element of ensuring equality in schools. It is essential that children and young people are able to have their voice heard in decisions that affect them. This applies to all children and young people. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out the right of children and young people to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account on any matter that affects them. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has formally adopted

the UNCRC as the basis of all its work and this commitment is delivered in practice by schools in Wales on a daily basis.

There are varying methods of ensuring that the voice of the child or young person is heard in a school or setting, including school councils, consultations, representative groups and peer support.

Further information on developing and improving participation in your school can be found on the following link:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/wellbeing/pupilvoice/?lang=en>

Attainment

For some time, schools and local authorities have worked to reduce the gap between boy's and girl's attainment. A detailed discussion of this issue and detailed recommendations were produced by ESTYN in 2008.

[Closing the gap between boys' and girls' attainment in schools - March 2008](#)

Subsequently the Welsh Government provided a response.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/raisingschoolstandards/estynremit/estynreports/closingthegap/?lang=en>

Work to tackle the issue is well embedded in the school Effectiveness Framework. However, attainment gaps continue to be an issue throughout Wales and a range of evidence suggests that gaps relating to ethnic background, disability and SEN status are also relevant in some circumstances alongside sex.

In Wales the earliest comparable data we have relates to achievement at Key Stage 1 or age 7. Some groups are more likely than others to achieve level 2 in teacher assessments. Examples includes girls were more likely than boys, Chinese and white pupils are more likely than black or Asian pupils and pupils on the SEN (Statement of Educational Needs) register (46%) are significantly less likely than pupils not on the register (81%).¹²

The '*How Fair is Wales?*' document highlights the need to close the gap in attainment 'between different socio-economic groups - including that of boys, black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils and disabled children.' It goes on to point out that the largest gap is between the levels of attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals compared to those who are not eligible. A smaller but substantial gap is clear between Girls and Boys and this gap is slightly larger in Wales than it is in England and substantially larger than the gap in Scotland.

	GCSE A* - C grades in Core Subjects 2008/09
FSM: Eligible	20%
Non-Eligible	52%
Girls	51%
Boys	43%

The report also recognises the relatively poor performance of pupils on the SEN register and notes that while other groups' attainment has improved year on year the performance of this group has not. Broader research on outcomes for disabled people found that disabled peoples GCSE results were worse than other peoples and that disabled people were 'nearly twice as likely to have no qualifications'.¹³ Not all disabled children have a statement of SEN but there is overlap between the two groups.

KS4 Examination Results in Wales by Ethnic Background, 2009		
SEN	% aged 15 at the start of the academic year achieving	
	Level 2	GCSE A*-C in core subjects ₁
All pupils on SEN register	22.6	12.2
Statemented	13.4	7.4
school Action Plus	21.9	12.8
school Action	26.5	13.6

Analysis of performance by ethnic group shows that it is not a simple case of non-white pupils performing worse than white ones. In fact pupils from Chinese and Indian backgrounds do particularly well in terms of attainment at age 16. However, pupils from Pakistani and Bangladeshi and from Black backgrounds tend to do poorly. The Welsh Government reported in 2008 that children of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller backgrounds also tend to do poorly¹⁴ This is supported in research by Croke and Crowley (2007) who list 'working class White boys and children from Gypsy Traveller and Roma, Black and Asian ethnic groups'¹⁵ as performing worse than average.

KS4 Examination Results in Wales by Ethnic Background, 2007-2009		
Ethnic Background	% aged 15 at the start of the academic year achieving	
	Level 2	GCSE A*-C in core subjects ₁
White	58.3	44.1
White - British	58.3	44.1
Any other White background	59.8	46.5
Mixed	58.4	42.2
White and Black Caribbean	51.7	33.6
White and Black African	48.6	38.6
White and Asian	68.5	53.6
Any other Mixed background	60.2	43.3
Asian	57.2	43.5
Indian	63.9	50.6
Pakistani	54.2	42.8
Bangladeshi	52.9	37.3
Any other Asian background	66.3	51.2
Black	44.3	30.9
Caribbean	46.3	31.3
African	42.8	30
Any other Black background	49.3	34.8
Chinese or Chinese British	80	68.2
Any other ethnic group	62.9	48.4
Unknown	57.6	45.9
All pupils	66.1	49.5

Source: Welsh Government, cited in WISERD Anatomy of Economic Inequality in Wales 2011.

Although little data exists regarding the experiences of those with different religious faith it has been noted that 'Muslim children have lower achievement than other children, and the religious needs of different faiths are often not met.'¹⁶

Point for consideration:

- **Over recent years national figures demonstrate relatively poor attainment for Boys, pupils from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds, Disabled pupils, children with SEN and those from lower socio-economic groups.**

Stereotyping

Back in 1993 the Equal Opportunities Commission highlighted strong gender stereotyping affecting uptake of courses and career choices. In 2007 Chaney et al demonstrated the continuing problem and argued that 'this difference is more marked in Wales than in other parts of Britain.' (Chaney et al, 2007: 171). ESTYN continues to recognise such issues noting 'stereotypical choices of options and subjects at all stages' by boys and girls and 'low career aspirations' among girls despite high levels of attainment and achievement.

Evidence from Butler (2005) suggests that 'segregation' along gender lines occurs early and continues to impact on children's 'aspirations' and 'expectations for themselves and others'. Renold and Allan (2006) describe a perceived contradiction between being 'bright' and being 'beautiful' which lead to particular pressures for girls in balancing being successful academically and being popular stating that:

'In order to be popular, it is necessary to downplay achievement although some girls choose to celebrate their achievement at the expense of friendship networks.'

Point for consideration:

- **Stereotyping affecting course and career options**
- **Stereotyping affecting aspirations**

14-19 and beyond

The '*How Fair is Wales?*' document presents reduction of NEETs as a key priority, in the field of education and for young people as a protected group (under Age) in their own right. The South Wales based Pre-VENT 14-19 scheme is an example of the positive work being undertaken in this area. The project aims to tackle the underlying reasons why youngsters find it difficult to learn and are at risk of leaving school without qualifications or the skills to find a job. Preventing people from becoming NEET is a key aspect of the 14 -19 learning pathways work. More information can be found here:

http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/circulars/learning_pathways_14_19?lang=en

Careers Wales survey in 2007 found that Boys were more likely to become NEET than Girls.¹⁷ Girls also continue to out perform boys at A-Level and are more likely to be in full time education aged 16-18.¹⁸

The Careers Wales survey also found 'lower percentages of ethnic minority than White students in Year 12 (normally aged 16/17) were moving on to formal education and training, and more were known not to be in education, employment or training (4.9 per cent compared with 3.2 per cent of White students).'¹⁹

Points for consideration:

- **Fewer ethnic minority children and boys continue in education into year 12, and their achievement levels are also lower**
- **Boys are more likely than girls not to be in any form of education, training or employment (NEET)**

Adult Education

The participation of adult learners in decision making about provision is a key mechanism which has been developed by local authorities, community learning networks and providers in recent years. Regular consultation, course evaluation and feedback are features of this work. ESTYN's 2009 report *Listening to the community: How good are providers at finding out the learning needs of adults in their local communities?*, provides a review of such approaches and recommendations for improvements.

<http://www.estyn.gov.uk/uploads/publications/6535.pdf>

Some equality issues are apparent from research which can be discussed with adult learners and potential learners, so that meaningful solutions can be agreed. Unlike other parts of the UK, there is a significant difference between male and female participation in adult learning in Wales. More women participate in adult learning than men. Nevertheless, when asked women and particularly women from ethnic minority groups cite child care or other caring responsibilities as a barrier to participating in adult education.²⁰ This would indicate the potential for even greater levels of participation among women and also highlight the need for us to understand more about the reasons men do not participate.

Participation declines with age and across Britain disabled people are half as likely to participate as non-disabled people.

Participation in adult learning by Gender, (Wales)	
Female	40%
Male	37%

Participation in adult learning by Age, (Wales)	
18-24 year olds	65%
25-44 year olds	50%
45-64 year olds	35%
those aged over 60	10%

Participation in adult learning Disabled and non-Disabled, (Britain)	
Disabled	23%
Non-Disabled	46%

Preliminary results for Wales also suggest that people from ethnic minorities are more likely to participate in adult learning than people from white backgrounds with the exception of people from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds who are least likely to participate.²¹

Points for consideration:

- **Childcare still a barrier to women's participation in adult learning**
- **People from ethnic minority groups more likely to cite childcare as a barrier to learning**
- **Disabled people are also less likely to undertake adult learning**

Appendix 1: Links to Further Reading

UK Triennial Review 'How Fair is Britain?' EHRC (2010)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publications/>

Wales Triennial Review 'How Fair is Wales' EHRC Wales (2011)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/publications/>

Victoria Winckler Ed, *Equality Issues In Wales: A Research Review* The Bevan Foundation for EHRC Wales (2010)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/publications/>

Better Public Services: Plugging the Gaps EHRC Wales (2009)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/publications/>

Who Runs Wales? EHRC Wales (2011)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/publications/>

An anatomy of economic inequality in Wales WISERD for EHRC Wales (2011)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales/publications/>

All Wales Survey of Bullying in schools Welsh Government (2009)

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/researchandevaluation/research/allwalesurvey/;jsessionid=Lyz2TDWZJQjJFWvZjDYBVLX6TyLDkc8XYM6TTdvDmZ20JZzgryd5!-1206084875?lang=en>

Working for a Fairer Future National Union of Teachers (2009)

<http://www.teachers.org.uk/node/11199>

Vikki Butler, *Young people's experiences of, and solutions to, identity related bullying: Research report* Barnardos (2009)

http://www.barnardos.org.uk/resources/research_and_publications/young-peoples-experiences-of-and-solutions-to-identity-related-bullying-research-report/publication-view.jsp?pid=PUB-1430

Appendix 2

Age

Children's Commissioner Wales

<http://www.childcom.org.uk/>

Barnardos Cymru

[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/who we are/in your region/wales.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/who_we_are/in_your_region/wales.htm)

NSPCC Cymru

http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/policyandpublicaffairs/wales/wales_wda48589.html

Older Peoples Commissioner

<http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/splash.aspx>

Age Cymru

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/cymru/>

Disability

Disability Wales

<http://www.disabilitywales.org/>

The Access Association

<http://www.accessassociation.co.uk/>

Sexual orientation and Gender reassignment

LGBT Excellence Centre

<http://lgbtec.org.uk/>

Stonewall Cymru

<http://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/cymru/>

Race – including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality

Religion or belief

Interfaith Wales

<http://www.interfaithwales.org/>

Sex

Coalition on men and Boys

www.comab.org.uk

Chwarae teg

<http://www.chwaraeteg.com/>

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- ⁴ Marriage and Civil Partnership are also protected characteristics but the general duty only applies in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.
- ⁵ EHRC (2010) *How Fair is Britain?*, page 311
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