

## **Staff Development Exercises**

(Taken from Glasgow United (2002) Glasgow City Council Education Services)

### **Activity 1: The A-Z of Sectarianism**

#### **Aims:**

- Develop a clearer understanding of the issues associated with sectarianism
- Identify the thoughts and feelings generated by sectarianism
- Explore definitions of sectarianism

#### **Equipment:**

- Flip chart paper and pens

This exercise will take between 30 and 45 minutes depending on the size of the group.

#### **Facilitators Notes:**

- Introduce the aims of the exercise
- Ask the participants to split into small groups or pairs and give out flip chart papers and pens
- Ask each group to go through each letter of the alphabet and write down the words that they associate with sectarianism e.g. a – attack, b – bigotry etc.
- The facilitator can move through the groups listening to the discussion and key themes
- When the A-Z charts are complete the facilitator should ask each group to feedback their words – noting the key themes, words, emotions etc.
- The facilitator should summarise these key themes for the group – it maybe useful to jot these on a board or flip chart.
- Ask the groups to imagine that they have to describe sectarianism to an alien or someone unfamiliar with the issue. Give them 5- 10 minutes to discuss their list and come up with a definition of sectarianism.
- When each group has finished ask them to feedback their definitions.
- The facilitator should open up the session for discussion -
  - Did they find it difficult?
  - What issues emerged from the discussion?

- The facilitator should be able to draw attention to issues that the group may have missed e.g. if a group focused on football the facilitator should be able to help them explore why this happened. Or if the definitions focused on Christian bigotry ask the group to consider sectarianism within another faith and their knowledge or experience of this.
- Give handouts of definition of sectarianism (see below)
- Ask the group for any final thoughts, comments or questions

### **What is sectarianism?**

There are different types of sectarianism, for example, political and religious sectarianism. This resource is concerned with religious sectarianism.

#### **Sectarianism (religious)**

*A narrow-minded following of a particular belief by members of a denomination that leads to prejudice, bigotry, discrimination, malice and ill-will towards members, or presumed members, of another denomination. Sectarianism can occur in different ways, either at an individual, group, cultural or institutional level.*

A denomination is a division or grouping within a faith. For example, Protestants and Catholics within Christianity, Sunni and Shia within Islam, and Orthodox and Reform within Judaism. Denominations within one faith share the same basic (fundamental) elements of the faith but they have differing practices or differing interpretations of specific elements of the faith.

Sectarianism in Scotland is often related to Protestant/Catholic divisions. In tackling sectarianism, it is helpful to understand that sectarianism occurs within other faiths as well as Christianity and is a feature of religious intolerance.

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