

Glendale Primary School, Glasgow



Glendale Primary School



Quality Indicators Demonstrated

1.1

Curriculum

- Structure of the Curriculum

3.3

Learning and Teaching

- Pupils' Learning Experiences

4.2

Support for Pupils

- Personal and Social Development

5.1

Ethos

- Climate and Relationships

5.3

- Equality and fairness

5.4

- Partnership with parents, the School Board and The Community

7.3

Management, Leadership and Quality Assurance

- Planning for Improvement

7.4

- Leadership

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Background

Glendale Primary is a very diverse school in terms of language, ethnicity and faith. It has 220 pupils of whom 65% are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Pakistani. There are six languages spoken daily in school with English, Punjabi and Urdu being the main ones. The predominant faith group is Muslim. Glendale has a national reputation for its work on anti-racism and the Headteacher is recognised nationally for taking anti-racist and anti-discriminatory work forward proactively. Glendale has built on strong values of challenging prejudice and discrimination for over two decades.

The Glendale Primary case study is included not so much for its anti-sectarian work which it claims is embryonic but for the manner in which it has built race equality into all aspects of its work. Glendale Primary feels that because of the foundations laid in the school for anti-discrimination work, it has both institutional and personnel confidence to take forward explicit anti-sectarian work.

The paragraph numbering below relates to equivalent Quality Indicators.

1.1: Structure of the curriculum

One of the key ways in which Glendale has embedded anti-racist work into learning and teaching has been to mainstream race issues into various aspects of the curriculum. For example, in Personal and Social Development there is direct anti-racist teaching (3 lessons per year) for each year plan. Staff discuss with each other the areas to cover each year to ensure a building-blocks approach to the issue. To obtain more information about the Glendale model and other year group lesson plans, please contact the Headteacher.

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Mainstreaming is a key concept for Glendale Primary. The school encourages all staff to routinely consider how diversity issues can be built into the work they are doing.

For example, selection of themes is important. Instead of a theme like 'My Gran', the school would choose a theme called 'Grannies' which means work is done around the role of grannies, types of grannies and so on. This enables the theme of 'My Gran' to be included without alienating / excluding a child that does not have a grandmother or one who may have more than two due to extended family situations. Such a theme also allows all white schools to reflect the multiracial nature of our present day Scottish society.

3.3: Pupil's learning experiences

Pupils are offered many opportunities to discuss issues of discrimination. However, teachers are clear that within classroom discussion while racist terminology and names are not used (to discourage the perpetuation of such terms), the topic of racist name-calling and slang is discussed.

Care is also taken to present whole pictures rather than snapshots of issues that may inadvertently result in further stereotyping. In particular the school is clear, when looking at international issues different perspectives are offered. For example, rather than just studying 'Ancient Egypt', they also include a look at 'Modern Cairo'. This gives children an opportunity to see not only the differences between a modern African city and Glasgow but also the similarities; to see both the differences and similarities between the lives of Egyptian children and Scottish children.

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Work on diversity starts immediately when pupils enter the school. At the early stages, the notion of different / same / equal are presented to pupils in different ways, e.g. getting children used to different skin tones, hair colour, nose shape, ways people worship, music and so on.

4.2: Personal and social development

The school takes a positive attitude to the diversity that exists within the school and utilises pupils' experiences and skills productively. For example, P6 pupils often work in groups reading stories in different languages into tapes for the bilingual and English as an Additional Language nursery pupils. Major assemblies are often presented bilingually or multilingually by the children themselves. This boosts the self-esteem of the range of language speakers in the school. The school is very clear about the need to nurture bilingualism as well as supporting those requiring English as an Additional Language support. There is a Punjabi and an Urdu bilingual teacher on the school staff and these teachers are positive role models for all pupils as well as parents.

5.1: Climate and relationships

The staff strongly identify with the school's clear stance on challenging prejudice and educating for equality. Relationships among pupils and staff are positive (as evidenced through the questionnaire referred to in 5.3) and morale is high. Respect is a key concept for the school and this generates cooperation as well as an ethos of politeness and respect for learning.

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5.3: Equality and fairness

The issues of equality and justice permeate the work of the school. These are issues that are discussed openly and freely each day. The school also seeks feedback from pupils about whether their work on equality and fairness has an impact on pupils' daily experiences of school. Last year, a questionnaire was given out to senior school pupils to find out if pupils felt they were being treated fairly in the school. Pupils responded that they were being treated fairly by adults and most fellow pupils but added that there were issues still needing to be addressed. They came up with their own rules as to how everyone in the school should behave to get rid of racism and bullying, including religious intolerance.

The issue of religious intolerance relates not only to the Protestant and Catholic intolerance but also to Islamophobia that many pupils face in the outside community. For a school like Glendale, any anti-sectarian work must include religious intolerance between faiths as well as the conflict that might exist within one faith. There also needs to be an understanding of local as well as international situations as these impact on the experiences of the pupils at the school.

5.4: Partnership with parents, the School Board and The Community

Glendale works with parents to take forward the school's anti-racist values. On registration, parents / carers are informed about the school's stance on racism, their work on anti-racism, equality and fairness and the expectation that parents will support this.

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Glendale feels strongly that the work done in schools on equality and fairness requires to be supported and endorsed at home and in the community. As the headteacher put it: 'It is important the work on anti-racism or anti-sectarianism that is done in schools is not undone when children go to football matches or elsewhere and hear the slang, chants which are sectarian or racist'. The school is clear that challenging racism, sectarianism and other forms of discrimination can only be achieved through partnership work with parents, community groups and agencies.

The communities that Glendale serve are diverse ethnically but also socially. Issues of multiple discrimination and the intersection between issues, e.g. race and poverty, are real. Therefore there are complex issues that staff in the school are required to understand about their pupils and their backgrounds in order to better meet their learning needs.

7.3: Planning for improvement

Mainstreaming is used to help staff to include issues of equality in their school development planning. This can be evidenced in the systematic manner in which the school engages with equality issues explicitly at each stage of the school year. Through mainstreaming equality issues into its whole school work the school is able to point to discrete pieces of work on anti-racism as well as ensuring a permeative approach throughout its work.

7.4: Leadership

The Headteacher sets the tone of the school by generating an anti-racist and equality framed ethos that she expects all who enter the school — pupils, staff, parents or visitors — to adhere to. For the Headteacher and staff, this is now a core value that keeps staff motivated and engaged with wider issues of prejudice and discrimination.

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The Headteacher also creates a supportive ethos for staff that supports them in their initiatives on anti-racism and provides necessary support if any difficult situations arise. As a result, staff have the confidence to move forward on complex and sensitive issues.

GOOD PRACTICE INDICATORS

- school celebrates its diversity and difficult issues like racism and prejudice are not avoided by staff in shaping their learning and teaching
- pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to engage critically with issues of prejudice, injustice and discrimination
- the diverse experiences and talents of pupils (e.g. linguistically) are valued and promoted. This helps raise self-esteem
- a lot of energy and time has been spent fostering a democratic school climate, e.g. building collaborative communities both within the school and in its relationship with the local and wider society, engaging in practices that empower staff and pupils to participate in real-life issues within school and community contexts
- clear leadership on equality and anti-discrimination issues
- mainstreaming is a core technique used to routinely embed issues of equality
- links are made between issues, e.g. class (poverty), race, faith, gender, language

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