This unit focuses on the importance of promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of work with children and young people. You will explore how prejudice and discrimination impacts on individuals and groups in a school setting and ways that you can support policies and procedures to break down barriers.

**By the end of this unit you will:**

1. understand the importance of promoting equality and diversity in work with children and young people
2. understand the impact of prejudice and discrimination on children and young people
3. understand inclusion and inclusive practices in work with children and young people.
Understand the importance of promoting equality and diversity in work with children and young people

Identify the current legislation and codes of practice relevant to the promotion of equality and valuing of diversity

Each school must produce a range of policies which formally set out the guidelines and procedures for ensuring equality. These must take account of the rights of all individuals and groups within the school. When considering the way policies work to ensure equality and inclusion, we often just think of the teaching and learning that is happening in the classroom. Policies must also pay regard to the values and practice which are part of all aspects of school life. Before exploring the policies in your own school, it is helpful to gain an understanding of relevant legislation and its purpose. You do not need detailed knowledge of each one, but it is important to understand the legal duties of the school. This will help you to understand your own role and responsibility to adhere to legislation and policy.

The rights of all children and young people are stated in the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The UK government ratified the treaty in 1991 and must ensure that the rights of children in the UK are protected through law. These rights are extensive and include the right to education and the right for children to have their views respected. Table 1 lists relevant legislation, which forms a basis for government statutory codes of practice and frameworks and school policies and procedures relating to equal opportunity and inclusive practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Discrimination Act 1995</td>
<td>Protects the rights of all those with disabilities. It also places a duty on schools (and other organisations) to eliminate barriers to ensure that individuals can gain equal access to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Discrimination Act 2005</td>
<td>Places a duty for schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and an Access Plan. Schools must encourage participation in all aspects of school life and eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001</td>
<td>Makes it unlawful for educational providers to discriminate against pupils with a special educational need or a disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000</td>
<td>Outlines the duty of organisations to promote good relationships between people from different races.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights Act 1998</td>
<td>Sets out rights of all individuals and allows them to take action against authorities when their rights have been affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Act 1989</td>
<td>Sets out the duty of local authorities (including schools) to provide services according to the needs of children and to ensure their safety and welfare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Legislation

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<tr>
<td>Children Act 2004</td>
<td>Sets out the duty to provide effective and accessible services for all children and underpins the five Every Child Matters outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Act 1996</td>
<td>Sets out the school’s responsibilities towards children with special educational needs. The Act also requires schools to provide additional resources, equipment and / or additional support to meet their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality Act 2010</td>
<td>Sets out the legal responsibilities of public bodies, including schools, to provide equality of opportunity for all citizens. This brings together nine equality laws</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Legislation relating to the rights of children and young people.**

### Functional skills

**ICT: Finding and selecting information**

You could use the Internet to search for further information on any of the above legislation. When doing this, it is important that you consider the relevance of the information that you find.

To support schools in their duty to implement this legislation there are a number of statutory frameworks, codes of practice and guidelines, some of which are listed as follows.

**The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001**

This outlines the statutory guidance for policy and the procedures and responsibilities towards children with special educational needs. It includes the levels of support which should be provided to children, depending upon their individual need.

**Removing Barriers to Achievement: The government’s strategy for SEN (2004)**

This provides a framework for schools to remove barriers and raise achievement of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

**Code of Practice on the duty to promote race equality (2002)**

This is a statutory code which supports public authorities (including schools) to meet their duty set out in the Race Relations (amendment) Act. It requires all schools to produce a written race equality policy which includes information on practical ways in which schools will work to promote race equality. School policies must demonstrate that they are working towards the following outcomes:

- reducing the gap of educational achievement between different ethnic groups
- improving relationships between different racial groups
- improving the behaviour of pupils
- promoting greater involvement of parents and the community
- ensuring that staff working in the school reflect cultural diversity of society
- an admissions policy which does not discriminate.
The policy must also include the strategies that will be used to monitor the difference that policy makes to individuals and the school.

**Removing barriers to achievement: the government’s strategy for SEN (2004)**

This document sets out the government’s vision for the education of children with special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The principles included are the need for:

- early intervention
- the removal of barriers
- raising achievement
- the delivery of improvements through partnerships across services.

**Disability Equality Scheme an Access Plan**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 builds on the 1995 Act by requiring all schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES). The DES must set out ways that schools promote equality of opportunity and promote positive attitudes towards pupils, staff and others with disabilities. In addition there must also be an Access Plan. This plan must identify how discriminatory barriers are removed. For example:

- an improvement to the physical environment, such as ramps, lifts, room layout, lighting
- providing information in different ways for children with a disability, such as audio, pictorial, larger print.

**School policies**

Many schools have a mission statement which sets out the commitment of the school toward inclusion and equality of opportunity. You may have read this on your school’s website or in correspondence. There must also be written policies, designed to reflect the rights and responsibilities of those within the school environment. Policies should also provide guidance for staff and visitors to the school on ways to ensure inclusive practice.

There may be a number of separate policies or they may be combined. Policies must include ways that schools work in relation to:

- race/cultural diversity
- equality of opportunity/inclusive practice
- safeguarding/bullying
- gifted and talented pupils
- special educational needs
- disability and access.

Policies are developed in response to legislation, codes of practice and statutory frameworks. The different ways in which schools promote the
rights and equality of opportunity for children and young people must be included in the policies. There is now a greater focus on the outcomes — that is, the difference that legislation has made to individuals and groups within the school. Schools must monitor the strengths and any weaknesses in policy. During school inspections, Ofsted also make judgements about the school’s inclusiveness.

Legislation is frequently amended in response to outcomes, so it is important that you are familiar with up-to-date policies and procedures within your own setting. The development of legislation, policies and practice should be seen as a cycle.

Describe the importance of supporting the rights of all children and young people to participation and equality of access

All pupils have the right to a broad and balanced curriculum. This must also be supported by high-quality teaching and learning experiences. Schools have a duty to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum irrespective of their background, race, culture, gender, additional need or disability. The references to the curriculum within this chapter include the curriculum in its widest sense. That is, not only the learning happening in the classroom, but everything which happens in the life of the school. To understand the importance of supporting the rights of children and young people, it is helpful to look in more detail at the intended outcomes of legislation, codes of practice and policies. Policies on inclusion and equality of opportunity can only be successful if they help to raise achievement and to promote self-identity and good relationships through the participation of all children and young people.

Portfolio activity

Obtain copies of policies in your own school and identify the ways in which they meet the requirements of the legislation, frameworks and codes of practice identified in this unit.

Key term

Participation — asking children and young people what works, what doesn’t work and what could work better, and involving them in the design, delivery and evaluation of services, on an ongoing basis.
Raising achievement
Promoting equality of access to the curriculum will maximise the personal achievement of children and young people. For a number of years, studies have shown that some groups of children do not meet their expected levels of attainment. The groups which have raised particular concern are children from black and minority ethnic groups or children who are vulnerable because of their economic or physical circumstances. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘attainment gap’.

Equal opportunity does not mean treating pupils the same, but ensuring that the curriculum meets the individual needs of all pupils. This involves understanding the barriers which exist. Intervention strategies, such as additional support, can then be put into place at an early stage before children fall too far behind. High expectations, of all children, are fundamental to raising achievement.

Improving participation
Participation involves everyone within the school. There should be opportunities to talk to children and their parents about all aspects of the school and the curriculum. This could include the development and the review of school policies. Participation can be achieved formally through student councils and parents’ meetings. It may also take place in the classroom when children and young people can be asked about how they learn best, what works for them and what could be improved.

CASE STUDY: Participation
Meadow Hill is a secondary school. One of the teachers was aware that a number of children were complaining that they had nowhere to go at lunchtime. They told her that they would like an area where they could chat to their friends, play games or do homework. The teacher approached the Head, on their behalf, and an area that could be used was identified. It was then decided to set up a working group which represented the diversity of young people within the school.

The group met regularly with the Deputy Head to decide on how the area should be used and the resources and equipment that would be needed. Care was taken with the layout to ensure that there would be easy access and suitable equipment and resources for pupils with disabilities or who had learning needs. At last the area was opened and is now used regularly by all the pupils. It includes an area for children to socialise and also quieter spaces with resources and computer facilities for study.

• What were the advantages of involving children in the design of this area?
• Why is it important to involve a diverse group of children?
• Suggest one way of gaining the views of all children in the school.

Functional skills
English: Speaking, listening and communication
This case study provides an excellent opportunity for discussion. Listen carefully to the views of others so that you can respond appropriately. You may have experience of something similar that takes place in your setting, this is a good opportunity to share your views and good practice with others.
Developing a sense of identity

Schools must recognise and support all pupils’ access to everything that is happening in the school. This will promote a sense of belonging and self-esteem. When children and young people are able to participate fully, they feel valued for who they are and the contribution that they make. This can be achieved by acknowledging and reflecting diversity within the school in the methods of teaching and the resources and materials used.

Children and young people must also have the opportunity to become independent learners. When they are able to make choices, and have control of their own learning, children are more likely to be motivated and achieve their full potential. This gives children a feeling of self-worth and well-being. Consider how you would feel about yourself if you had no choice about how to go about a task or if you had to rely on others to help you to carry out simple activities. Think about the children and young people that you work with. Do they have opportunities to:

● discuss and share their own ideas and beliefs?
● take part in after-school activities, join clubs and social events?
● choose ways to study and to present their work?

Functional skills

ICT: Developing, presenting and communicating information

When you have completed the task above, you could use PowerPoint to produce a short presentation to share with your group that shows how you have helped the pupil to develop their independence and identity.

Improving relationships between individuals and groups

Policies which promote equality and inclusion give out a positive message and encourage an atmosphere of mutual respect. Children must have their rights protected, but should also learn about their responsibilities to others. Respect can be promoted informally through your everyday contact with groups of children and young people. Your own attitudes and actions will provide a model for children, so it is important that you demonstrate consideration and fairness in all your interactions.

Your role may also include more formal pastoral support or helping to deliver curriculum programmes such as personal, social and health education (PSHE) and Citizenship. These programmes have a particular focus on rights and responsibilities. They prepare children and young people for living and working in a diverse society.
Describe the importance and benefits of valuing and promoting cultural diversity in work with children and young people

Culture can have many different meanings and the way the term is used has changed over time. Culture can cut across nationality and religions. It is what gives groups of people in our society their identity. It also refers to the way groups live, for example, shared customs, thoughts, arts, language and social activity. Recognising and promoting the cultural diversity of individuals and groups within the school will enrich learning and promote the knowledge and understanding of all pupils.

You may work with children whose home language is not English, particularly if you are bilingual yourself. It is important that schools celebrate the bilingual or multilingual skills of pupils. Schools will have a policy in place which states how to ensure inclusive practice, including the additional support for pupils who need to improve their English.

Key term

Culture – shared way of life, including aspects such as beliefs, language, arts and music

PROMOTING AND VALUING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- Does the environment reflect the cultural diversity of the school?
- Do pupils have the opportunity to learn about the cultural diversity in society?
- Do you challenge discrimination or prejudice which has happened because of cultural differences?
- Do the materials used for teaching take into account cultural diversity?
- Is cultural diversity only acknowledged at certain times in the term – e.g. when celebrating festivals?
- Do you know about the culture of individual children with whom you work?

How well do you manage to promote and value cultural diversity?

It is important that you understand the cultural diversity of the pupils within the school and particularly those you are supporting. You will then be able to help pupils to make sense of their learning by making connections to their own lives. Your role may include providing pastoral support to individual children. Understanding and taking account of their background and culture is essential for you to build effective relationships and provide support.

The diverse cultures in society should be recognised and reflected throughout the curriculum. For example, incorporating music, foods, stories and drama from a range of cultures will contribute to a rich curriculum. This will demonstrate that you are not only valuing the culture of groups but also supporting all pupils to explore and understand cultures which are different from their own.
Where cultural diversity is only acknowledged through posters, or at only particular times of the year through festivals, it could be viewed as *tokenism*. Promoting an understanding of cultural diversity will help to prevent *stereotyping* and reduce prejudice and discrimination.

**Portfolio activity**

Find out about policies for supporting children who may transfer to your school from minority ethnic groups, for example, Roma, gypsy or traveller children. How does the school prepare for their arrival and what support will be provided when they actually attend?

**Functional skills**

**ICT: Using ICT**

You could use a digital camera and take pictures of the different things in your school that promote other cultures and beliefs.

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**Key term**

*Tokenism* — giving the appearance of an inclusive environment

*Stereotyping* — making assumptions about an individual, for example, because of their race or a disability

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**Knowledge into action**

Can you think of any activities where you could help children to discover a range of vegetables from around the world?

Where cultural diversity is only acknowledged through posters, or at only particular times of the year through festivals, it could be viewed as *tokenism*. Promoting an understanding of cultural diversity will help to prevent *stereotyping* and reduce prejudice and discrimination.

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**Key term**

*Prejudice* — forming an opinion of an individual or group which is not based on knowledge or facts

*Discrimination* — treating an individual or group less favourably because of a personal characteristic such as race, religion or special educational need

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**Understand the impact of prejudice and discrimination on children and young people**

Describe ways in which children and young people can experience prejudice and discrimination

Everyone working in schools must be aware of ways that children can experience *prejudice* and *discrimination*. Prejudice can occur through lack of knowledge and understanding of diversity. Prejudice is making assumptions about children or young people because they belong to a particular group. For example, a child who has a disability may be assumed to have learning difficulties.
When people demonstrate prejudice, they often go on to label children. A label may be given to an individual or group. It happens when a particular characteristic or label is given because of prejudices. For example, a group of children who receive additional support with reading may be labelled as the ‘slow’ group. Boys may be expected to be ‘noisy’ and girls ‘quiet’.

Prejudice and labelling can often lead to discrimination. Discrimination happens when children do not receive equality of opportunity. We may all feel that we have been discriminated against at some time in our lives, perhaps because of gender or age.

Some individuals or groups are more likely to experience discrimination. This may happen because of their race, culture, social background, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disability.

**Types of discrimination**

Children and young people may experience direct discrimination or indirect discrimination.

**Direct discrimination**

This happens when children and young people are not allowed to access part of the curriculum and school activities because of their particular situation such as race, gender or disability. An example is where a school does not accept a pupil because of their special educational need or a group of pupils do not let another pupil join in with them because of their race.

**Indirect discrimination**

Staff need to be aware of ways that children and young people experience indirect discrimination. This is often more difficult to spot. Indirect discrimination often occurs when practice and procedures are applied without consideration to individuals’ circumstances. A child will not be excluded directly but will be unable to participate because of their personal situation. For example, a school visit to caves where pupils must wear a hard hat will indirectly discriminate against a pupil who wears a turban as part of their religion.

Discrimination can be:

- institutional: this happens when the policies and procedures of an organisation allow practice which directly or indirectly discriminates against someone
- individual: this may be practised by individuals or groups within the school. Individuals could be staff, visitors to the school or other children and young people.

**Over to you!**

Research examples of discrimination and identify the type. Is each example institutional or individual? Is the discrimination direct or indirect? Go on to consider the reasons why prejudice or discrimination has happened.
Describe the impact of prejudice and discrimination on children and young people

Prejudice and discrimination can only have negative effects on children and young people. As well as affecting academic progress of children, discrimination can negatively impact their overall health and well-being.

When children or young people feel they are being discriminated against they may experience:

- loss of self-esteem
- disempowerment
- confusion
- anger
- lack of motivation
- depression.

Key term

Disempowerment – when individuals or groups are deprived of influence or power

Assess how own attitudes, values and behaviour could impact on work with children and young people

All those working in the school have a legal duty to protect the rights of children and young people. It is important that you examine your own attitudes and values critically, to consider how these may impact on
the way you work with children. An individual’s background, upbringing and experiences can have an effect on attitudes towards individuals and groups, so it is important to recognise these. Personal prejudices, which may lead to discriminatory practice, can be overcome through developing a greater understanding of diverse groups in society. For example, you can overcome them by finding out about the religious beliefs and cultures of the children you work with, and by knowing about any special educational needs or disabilities.

Do not make assumptions about children and young people. Finding out about their backgrounds, interests, abilities and individual needs will help you to provide more effective, appropriate and personalised support.

Describe the importance of promoting anti-discriminatory practice in work with children and young people

The promotion of anti-discriminatory practice should underpin all work in schools. It is not sufficient to have policies in place which make statements about anti-discriminatory practice or just to pay lip service to it. Schools must demonstrate anti-discriminatory practice. They must also monitor the ways that positive practice impacts on the education and well-being of the children and young people. As a member of the school team, you share responsibility to ensure that anti-discriminatory practice is promoted. You must also recognise when discrimination is happening.

Knowledge into action

Research books and reading materials in the class or school library. Do they reflect the range of cultures in society? Are people with disabilities shown in a positive light? Are there examples of females in ‘traditional’ men’s roles and vice versa? Do you ensure that you select and use anti-discriminatory materials with children and young people?

Key term

Ethos – the atmosphere within the school – a positive ethos gives a sense of shared purpose, values and beliefs

BEST PRACTICE CHECKLIST: Promoting anti-discriminatory practice

- Be a good role model – do not only pay lip service to anti-discriminatory practice, but demonstrate it in everything you do.
- Appreciate and promote diversity and individuality of children and young people by acknowledging their positive attributes and abilities.
- Listen to and involve children and young people in the delivery of services, and respond to their concerns.
- Recognise that the child or young person is at the centre of the learning by treating each one as an individual.
- Have realistic but the highest expectations of all children and young people.
- Support a positive ethos within the school.
- Give pupils the confidence and skills to challenge prejudice or racist behaviour of others.
- Recognise and question anti-discriminatory practice.
Describe how to challenge discrimination

You should always challenge discrimination, but to do this it is essential that you can recognise anti-discriminatory practice. Your role is to protect children from discrimination. If you ignore it when it happens, this will be viewed as condoning (excusing or overlooking) discrimination. Consider how a child may feel if they experience discrimination which is then ignored by a member of staff who is there to support them. The child could feel that you share the view of the perpetrator or believe that the way they are being treated is ‘normal’. They may feel that they are in some way inferior. At the very least, they will feel let down that you did not protect their rights.

It can be difficult to challenge discrimination, particularly if it is institutional or practised by a colleague, so it is important that you consider how to deal with different and often difficult situations. To be able to challenge discrimination you require knowledge of policy, procedures and practice. If you feel confident about what is good practice, you will be able to deal more effectively with incidents that arise.

When discrimination happens it may be intentional, but it can also be because of ignorance and lack of understanding. It is not easy to change the views of others but you must challenge discriminatory comments and actions. It is important to learn assertiveness strategies that can help when you recognise discrimination. When challenging discrimination, you should:

1. explain what has happened or what has been said that is discriminatory
2. state the effect of this on the individual, group and others
3. suggest or model ways to ensure anti-discriminatory practice.

When you are concerned about anti-discriminatory practice, whether by staff or pupils in the school, you should speak to your manager or supervisor at the school or college tutor. You must also be aware of the school’s policy when racism is happening. The code of practice to promote race equality includes the duty of the school to monitor and report to the Local Education Authority (LEA) on all racist incidents.
Portfolio activity

Consider the discriminatory practice in the following scenario. Imagine you are present during each event and suggest:

1. why the practice is discriminatory
2. what would you say and do.

Scenario 1
When assigning responsibilities for the end-of-term production at a secondary school, the teacher assigns the role of making scenery to the boys and the role of producing costumes to the girls.

Scenario 2
You are in the playground and notice a group of children playing football when they are approached by a boy who has just arrived in the UK from eastern Europe. He asks to play but is told to ‘go away’ and that he ‘shouldn’t be at the school’.

Scenario 3
You attend a meeting to discuss a forthcoming school visit. One member of staff suggests a local wildlife centre. You know the centre well and know that access for those with disabilities is very difficult. It is positioned on a hill and there are a lot of steps. When you mention that it would prevent a pupil who uses a wheelchair from taking part, another member of staff replies that the pupil could stay behind and work with another class.

Understand inclusion and inclusive practices in work with children and young people

Describe what is meant by inclusion and inclusive practices

Inclusive practice is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers to participation and belonging. Inclusion is about ensuring that children and young people, whatever their background or situation, are able to participate fully in all aspects of the life of the school. Inclusive practices will ensure that everyone feels valued and has a sense of belonging. Inclusion is not about viewing everyone as the same or providing the same work, but about providing the same opportunities and access to a high quality of education. In an inclusive environment there is recognition, acceptance and celebration of differences and similarities.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, and statutory guidance in the Special Educational Needs Codes of Practice 2001, mean that the majority of children with special educational needs and disabilities are now educated in mainstream schools. This does not exclude children from attending specialist educational setting if that is more appropriate and will provide for pupils with more complex needs.
To understand the issue of inclusive practice for children and young people, it is helpful to understand the medical and social model of disability.

**The medical model of disability**
The medical model is based on an assumption that the child must adapt to the environment which exists. This model promotes an atmosphere of ‘dependence’. The social model starts with the assumption that the way a school operates, the barriers present and different attitudes can prevent individuals from participating in society. This view of disability works to empower children and young people.

**The social model of disability**
Inclusive practice is based upon the social model of disability. Legislation requires schools to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ and remove barriers so that children and young people can take part in educational and social activities within the school alongside other pupils. Pupils with additional needs often require the additional support of a teaching assistant or school support worker, but inclusion for pupils is not only about providing additional support. Adjustments may relate to:

- the physical environment, such as providing lifts, ramps, rails and furniture at the correct height for children with a physical disability, or improved lighting for children with a visual impairment
- providing information, such as worksheet and books with larger print, audio tapes, symbols or alternative forms of communication
- the curriculum, such as groupings, timetabling, additional support, technology (touch-screen computers, trackerballs, text to speech software) or adjustments to assessment (extra time, using different methods to capture evidence).

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**Key term**

**Empower** — enabling the child or young person to make own choices — the opposite of dependency

**How well does your school demonstrate inclusive practice?**
Inclusive practice is not only about the way schools provide for the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities. Inclusion policies must take account of the needs of all the pupils in the school.

Describe features of an inclusive setting for children and young people

People often talk about the ethos of a school. It is difficult to sum up what this means. It is something which is often apparent when you enter the school building. There is a feeling that everyone in the school matters and all play their part. Children and young people look purposeful; they approach staff with confidence. The surroundings reflect the diversity of all those within the school. There is a ‘buzz’ of purposeful activity. Do you remember the feeling you got when you entered the school where you work for the first time? What was it about the atmosphere which made you feel welcome and want to become part of the staff?

An inclusive setting is one which uses a whole-school approach to learning. Barriers are recognised and strategies used to remove them. Where children experience difficulties such as special educational needs or disabilities, there is an approach which focuses on what the child or young person can do rather than the difficulties they are experiencing.

A school setting which is ‘inclusive’ will have the following features.

- Barriers are recognised and staff have a good understanding of individuals and groups of children so that they are aware of any difficulties the children may have in accessing the curriculum.
- Barriers are then removed or minimised — the environment is adapted, and personalised support, resources or equipment are provided.
- Pupils are educated alongside their peers and not segregated when they need support. For example, a pupil with English as an additional language will receive language support in the classroom.
- Children and young people are given and use their ‘voice’ — that is, their own views and opinions are listened to and valued. This may be informal or through a school council or form representatives.
- There are clear policies and procedures and these are reviewed regularly.
All staff receive regular training relating to inclusion, diversity and equality of opportunity.

The school works in partnership with stakeholders — staff, governors, parents and children and young people.

The school works in partnership with other services, for example, speech and language therapists or educational psychologists, to ensure that children and young people receive appropriate professional support.

**CASE STUDY: Inclusive practice**

Sean has just qualified as a teaching assistant and has started his new post at a large primary school. It is his first week and so that he gets to know the school, staff and children, he has been asked to work alongside Kira, an experienced teaching assistant who has been at the school for a number of years. Sean joined Kira who was working with a group of 7-year-old children making 3D models. Sean noticed one of the children, Jamie, sitting at the side just watching and asked where his model was. Kira’s reply was that because of his disability (cerebral palsy), Jamie had difficulty in using the tools and materials. She said that she asks him to read a book during the art and craft lesson.

- Suggest how Jamie might feel.
- What message does this give to other children in the group?
- Which policies, codes and legislation could Sean refer to when challenging the exclusive practice with Kira?
- Sean will support this group in future weeks. How can he ensure that Jamie is included?

Describe how inclusion works in own sector of the children’s workforce

Professionals who work across all children’s services must share a common understanding of values and principles of inclusion. The ways in which the values and principles are put into practice may vary depending on the type of organisation and its role in the education and care of children and young people. Whatever the organisation, the child should always be at the centre of all practice.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the National Curriculum give clear guidance on an inclusive approach to learning and assessment. You will explore the content of each curriculum in other units, but what is important here is to consider how the content is delivered. This leaves it open so that if it stays as a statutory curriculum or changes to guidance the information is ok.

The EYFS provides a statement on the duty of settings to meet the needs of all children in relation to their learning, development and personal welfare. This reads: ‘Providers have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference so that every child is included and not disadvantaged.’
According to the National Curriculum Inclusion Statement, schools must implement a whole-school approach to both the national and wider curriculum. Schools must:

- provide a curriculum which ensures active participation and achievement of all pupils
- recognise pupils’ entitlement to high-quality learning experiences
- meet the needs and interests of all pupils
- recognise and overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment.

**Personalised learning**

In a move to raise standards, schools have adopted a system of personalised learning. This may appear on the surface to be exclusive as it focuses on the needs of individual children and young people. In practice, personalised learning ensures that all children, regardless of their background, special educational needs, disability or culture, receive the support they need to make progress. This works to narrow the gap of educational achievement.

Where personalised learning is successful, children and young people experience:

- a challenging curriculum
- staff who have high expectations
- personal targets
- more focused assessment
- early identification and intervention when targets are not achieved.

*How do you ensure that all the pupils are included?*
Promoting well-being through an inclusive curriculum

The key role of the school is to provide a good-quality education through an inclusive curriculum, but the school also has a wider role to consider in ensuring the well-being of children. Programmes such as citizenship and personal, social and health education help to build relationships and also prepare children for living and working in the wider society.

Every Child Matters

The Every Child Matters outcomes were introduced in 2004 in response to the inquiry following the death of Victoria Climbié. The inquiry highlighted the need for services, including schools, to work more closely to protect and support the needs and rights of all children. Schools and other childcare services must demonstrate ways that they work toward each of the five outcomes:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being.

Schools may need to work with specialist services, such as physiotherapy or speech therapy, so that children are able to reach their full potential.

Reflect

Consider ways that you are able to contribute towards an inclusive environment. How do you build good relationships with children and young people? Do you know about the interests and experiences of children you work with? Having this knowledge and understanding of the children with whom you work will help them to feel valued, develop a sense of belonging and be able to discuss any concerns they may have.

BEST PRACTICE CHECKLIST: Contributing to an inclusive environment

- Know the individual needs of children and any potential barriers to their learning.
- Listen to children and involve them in their own learning.
- Know the background and interests of individual children, and draw on these when supporting their learning.
- Include materials and resources in your work with children which reflect diversity in society.
- Find out about the individual targets of the children with whom you work.
- Use different strategies to support children with their learning.
- Have high expectations of all children.
- Report any concerns that you have about children’s progress and/or well-being.
Getting ready for assessment

You will need to demonstrate an understanding of legislation and codes of practice in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and how these are translated into practice within the school setting.

- Write a brief summary of relevant legislation.
- Obtain policies and procedures from the school which relate to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Discuss these procedures with your supervisor or manager to find how equality of opportunity and inclusion work in practice within the school.
- Find out about adjustments made within the school to include children who have a disability.
- Observe practice within the school and note down examples of anti-discriminatory practice and inclusion.
- Identify ways that you can include materials or resources which reflect cultural diversity in your work with children and young people – for example, a book, art work or music.

Check your knowledge

1. Name legislation and statutory guidelines which work to protect children and young people from racism.
2. Identify the diverse groups within your school.
3. Give an example of tokenism.
4. What is culture?
5. What must schools do to meet the requirements of the Code of Practice on the duty to promote race equality (2002)?
6. Give one example direct discrimination and one of indirect discrimination.
7. What is meant by the social model of disability?
8. What are the key features of personalised learning?

References and further reading

- National Curriculum Inclusion Statement
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

WEBSITES
www.bbc.uk/religion – information about different religions
www.equalityhumanrights.com – Equality and Human Rights Commission
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk – Every Child Matters
www.inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk – information on supporting individual learning needs
www.teachernet.gov.uk – resources for teaching and learning
www.unicef.org.uk – unicef promotes the rights of all children