

How to Conduct a Policy Review

A review should be about diversity-proofing your current policies. Are your policies in line with good equality and diversity practices? Key questions you should ask are...

1. Are there any barriers that might prevent students from diverse cultural backgrounds (including Travellers) gain equal benefit from a school policy?

This might include language barriers, literacy issues, cultural or religious barriers. You could consider talking to your local Traveller or other ethnic minority groups to help look at potential barriers. Talking with parents, including culturally diverse parents will also help you identify any potential barriers.

2. Are there any unintended consequences (of the policy) for students and parents from diverse cultural backgrounds?

Unintended consequences or indirect discrimination occurs when a rule, practice or policy appears to be neutral, but in effect has a disproportionate impact on a particular group. Rules can appear fair, however in practice they can have a particular impact on specific groups.

For example: The Parent rule in some enrolment policies can indirectly discriminate against Traveller or migrant children as their parents are less likely to have attended the school.

3. Can we make minor changes to this policy to improve equality of access, experience, articipation and outcome for parents and students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

Is there anything we can add or change to the policy to reduce indirect discrimination and enhance the supports for culturally diverse parents and children.

For Example: A response to language or literacy barriers might be:

- Enrolment forms being available in different languages if possible, offering assistance to parents who may have language or literacy issues with completing the forms, having an open enrolment day where people can get help with form filling.
- Include on the enrolment form a place for parents to indicate if they would like a phone call as well as a text or letter regarding important school correspondence
- Schools could consider having follow up calls, if school forms are not returned, to ensure language or literacy issues are not a barrier to participation.
- Where written correspondence to parents is outlined as necessary (in policy and procedures) the need for a phone-call could also be included.

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4. Have we included in our policy a list of supports the school already has in place for culturally diverse parents and students?

This includes intercultural, ant-racist and Yellow Flag initiatives the school currently does to create an inclusive school.

Things like buddy systems, orientation week, information in different languages, induction packs, parental supports, parent classes, coffee mornings, home-school initiatives & supports, creating an intercultural physical environment in the school.

5. Have we written into our policy the intercultural projects carried out during the Yellow Flag year which we would like to continue on an annual/bi annual basis?

This might include maintaining the Yellow Flag Diversity Committee, getting involved with Traveller pride week on an annual basis, maintaining links with local migrant and Traveller organisations, holding an annual event on International Day for the Elimination of Racism, using the intercultural calendar and highlighting different intercultural events in the school, holding an annual intercultural event, organising Friendship Week on an annual basis, holding parent intercultural coffee mornings etc.

