

The background is a solid purple color with various abstract geometric patterns. On the left, a white line starts from a small circle at the bottom, curves upwards and to the right, and ends near the word 'PROJECT'. Below the starting circle, there is a vertical line of seven smaller white circles. In the upper right, there is a large, stylized white shape that resembles a letter 'E' or a similar symbol, with a circular cutout in its center. The word 'PROJECT' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font across the middle of this shape.

PROJECT

**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
(QI) AND THE PROMOTION
OF RACE EQUALITY IN
SCOTTISH SCHOOLS**

Executive Summary

1. Content and Introduction

- 1.1 This component of SEED Project 5 considers the actual and potential roles for quality improvement in promoting race equality in Scottish schools, as is required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act [RR(A)A] 2000.
- 1.2 It reviews the legislative and policy framework supporting the related educational aims of inclusion, equal and fair provision and the continual improvement of service delivery, concluding that the quality improvement function has a vital and, in places, a not yet fully realised contribution to make in meeting Scottish Executive race equality objectives in school education.
- 1.3 The study illustrates how the quality improvement and inclusion objectives of the Standards in Scottish Schools Act (SiSSA) 2000 complement and mesh with the general and specific duties to promote race equality contained in the RR(A)A.
- 1.4 It describes the comprehensive educational improvement structure already in place, involving the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED), Education Authorities (EAs), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and schools. It specifically demonstrates how the remit of quality improvement officers (QIOs) articulates very well with the promotion of race equality concluding that "the function of quality assurance and improvement is central to the delivery and development of mainstreamed race equality provision..." (p.3)
- 1.5 Attention is drawn, nevertheless, to the evident gap between policy/objectives and practice identified in other CERES reports and also reflected in this study.
- 1.6 Some EAs' efforts to achieve the mainstreaming of race equality considerations in schools were evidenced early, while in others it took 'minded' letters from the Commission for Racial Equality in 2004 to initiate systematic action to produce appropriate race equality policies (REPs) and to embark on serious practice development.
- 1.7 With notable exceptions (some of which are identified as exhibiting good practice) the main activity by HMIE, EAs and schools in directly employing the QI function to address institutional racism has taken place in the period since 2004. However, much remains to be done.

2. Progress made in 'Tooling Up' the QI Element in Mainstreaming Race Equality in School Education

- 2.1 In 2002–3 HMle, in attempting to establish a baseline for race equality performance in Scottish school education, conducted thematic visits to all EAs, concluding “good practice in tackling racism and promoting race equality is not consistent across Scotland”.
- 2.2 Subsequently HMle, in 2004 and 2005, published two documents in its Inclusion and Equality series, respectively ‘Promoting Race Equality’ and ‘Promoting Race Equality: Making it Happen’. In the former, the Inspectorate stated plainly that, institutionally, EAs and schools had the duty “to value cultural diversity and prevent racism” and that “promoting race equality should be an integral part of the life and work of a school”. Furthermore that, in QI terms, “meeting the duties of the RR(A)A has an important role to play in supporting all five National Priorities” (NPs).
- 2.3 Additionally HMle issued an audit framework to assist EAs, schools and quality improvement officers (QIOs) specifically to evaluate current race equality performance and to improve it; examples of good practice were provided.
- 2.4 In 2004, the Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland (CERES), updated in collaboration with the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) the race equality audit toolkit which had previously been written for the Scottish Executive Staff Development website for teachers on race equality. The updated toolkit on race equality was comprehensive and addressed **all** the themes and indicators in HMle’s self-evaluation framework How Good Is Our School? (HGIOS), thereby providing those responsible for quality improvement with powerful tools in evaluating and improving performance in the mainstreaming of race equality. These tools articulate extremely well with QIO remits in such fields as data analysis, performance evaluation and improvement, strategic/operational planning, partnership with HMle, EAs, schools and communities. The mechanisms are there, available for use.
- 2.5 Some EAs and schools have taken the lead and committed themselves to promoting race equality as legally required. As reported, HMle has found that in such circumstances, high performance in the promoting race equality field correlates strongly with high expectations and levels of attainment, a respectful overall ethos and connectivity with parents/carers and the community.
- 2.6 Such achievements demonstrate in practice the capacity to combine high levels of educational performance with inclusion and equality – which has usually come about through the combination of (head)teachers’ professional

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commitment and skills, encouraged and augmented by QI personnel 'tooled up' for the task.

- 2.7 Both SEED and HMle, in their 2005–8 REPs, have reinforced their commitment to the promotion of race equality. Specifically, the Inspectorate has stated that HMle:
- "...are committed to 'mainstreaming the consideration of race equality issues in everything we do', [RES, 2005–8 p.16]
 - "(will) review procedures and guidance on the inspection of schools and EAs to ensure that there is appropriate focus on evaluating and reporting on race equality issues" [RES, 2005–8 pp.9–10]
- 2.8 It has also been suggested that, since EAs are now deemed by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) to have adequate published policies on race equality, HMle is ready to take a more active part in evaluating and reviewing their strategies and actions in the implementation field, particularly in the school sector. Once more the orientation and skills associated with QI will be vital in helping to combat institutional racism where it applies.
- 2.9 The CRE itself has indicated the need for EAs and schools, in the 2005–8 period to produce measurable outcomes as evidence of compliance with the Act, rather than relying on the production of acceptable policies as such evidence.
- 2.10 Evidence submitted to Project 5 illustrated that a number of EAs and schools have successfully employed the QI function in promoting race equality by explicitly embedding such considerations in:
- aims and values
 - 'mainstream' policies and activities at EA and school levels
 - performance evaluation and improvement frameworks and practices
 - staff remits and development
 - curriculum content and development [particularly in relation to 'A Curriculum for Excellence' (ACE)]
 - school-community relations
 - partnerships, especially with HMle

It is notable that much good practice occurs in places with relatively few black and minority ethnic inhabitants.

3. The Task Ahead

- 3.1 Examples of where QI approaches have been positively applied are laudable, but in some areas much remains to be done.
- 3.2 In 2005 HMIE found that the promotion of race equality required improvement in such key fields as:
 - the provision of anti-racist education
 - monitoring
 - involving BME parents/carers
 - bilingualism
 - staff development
- 3.3 The Inspectorate stated that most primary schools “promote a strong sense of equality and fairness”, while indicating that, in secondaries “anti-racism and diversity requires a greater emphasis in some schools, particularly through the curriculum...” The Inspectorate concluded that the implementation of inclusive approaches...remains variable across the country, particularly in the schools sector [HMIE 2006, Improving Scottish Education pp.29, 43,90]
- 3.4 With particular relevance to QI and QIOs, HMIE warned against the complacent view that progress will necessarily occur “naturally”, since over a third of primary and 45% of secondary schools have important weaknesses in the field of self-evaluation. **Clearly more ‘official’ and effective QI intervention is required.**
- 3.5 It is important that a focussed effort is made to expand and deepen the good practice identified in Section 6 of the full Report and that the staff development and curriculum material produced by Projects 3 and 4 are suitably promoted and applied.
- 3.6 In the view of experienced QI personnel consulted in the course of Project 5’s work the following developments would significantly enhance the potential and actual contribution of the QI function to the promotion of race equality:
 - the enhancement of race equality skills and expertise among QI staff, rooted in the legal requirements of the RR(A)A
 - the allocation of higher priority to the promotion of race equality in the operational activity of QIOs, both in discrete terms, and as an embedded element in all improvement initiatives and targets
 - greater strategic deployment of the QI function in mainstreaming race equality as required by the general and specific duties of the RR(A)A
 - more direct involvement of the QI function at EA level and jointly with HMIE in monitoring, evaluating and reporting upon school and EA performance in promoting race equality

3. The Task Ahead

- 3.7 Expert respondents also emphasised the need to ensure that the promotion of race equality become a key component embedded in developing the 4 core capacities underpinning “A Curriculum for Excellence”, so that, in QI terms, the mainstreaming impact could be assessed across all 5 national priority areas.
- 3.8 Achieving such outcomes will require application and resourcing in EAs where little or no relevant progress has yet been made, and where professional and community scepticism is substantial.
- 3.9 The Scottish Executive Equality Unit has explicitly identified a need to:
- *“drive up public sector performance on race equality...”*
 - *“develop standards and tools for evaluation of race equality work”*
 - *“...provide more strategic leadership and direction on race equality work...”*
- 3.10 In contributing to this objective the full report offers details on how the QI function can and should specifically articulate with the promotion of race equality through utilising available advice and good practice in such areas as impact assessment, performance measurement and curriculum mainstreaming.
- 3.11 Also, in Section 7 of SEED Project 3, “Guidance for Equality Assurance in Education within Local Authorities”, detailed checklists and monitoring criteria are provided, offering QI personnel detailed advice on how better to promote race equality in a wide range of fields, from strategic management to the conduct of thematic reviews in schools.
- 3.12 The Project 5 Report concludes that Education Authorities, in partnership with HMIE, should rigorously employ their quality improvement criteria to the race equality field, as required by UK and Scottish legislation. Unless this is undertaken it is hard to see how institutional and system-wide mainstreaming can proceed outwith the improvement framework designed to support, sustain and evidence educational development.

