

Equinet Training on positive action measures

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Public sector equality duty and positive actions in education and healthcare

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Case study 1. Reducing exclusions among Somali and African Caribbean boys - Preston Manor School

Background information

In 2012 Preston Manor School identified that Somali and African Caribbean pupils were disproportionately given fixed term exclusions at Key Stage 4. For example, of the 122 students excluded with fixed term exclusions in 2011-12, 45 were to Somali and African Caribbean pupils.

Fixed term exclusions have a negative effect on the attainment level of students and ultimately on their life chances. Thus, the school decided to focus some of its resources on tackling this issue. In order to do so, it set the following equality objective to support compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty: to achieve a 40 percent reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions of Somali and African Caribbean pupils over 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Actions

The use of equality information was key in presenting the issue to all parties (staff, students and parents) in an objective and sensitive way. After this was done, the school decided to launch the Black Boys Council (BBC) as their main initiative to tackle fixed-term exclusions among Black boys.

The BBC is made of pupils from various year groups who are academically successful as well as those who are less successful and who are at risk of being excluded. The idea is to provide those pupils with an opportunity to broaden their horizons and to increase their aspirations and self-esteem. For example, BBC members:

Met with successful Black men from Blue Chip companies such as KPMG, one of the largest professional services companies in the world and one of the Big Four auditors, along with Deloitte, Ernst & Young and PricewaterhouseCoopers ;

Participated in the business training day that takes place every year at Preston Manor School and which consists of researching, selecting, marketing and selling a product of their choice.

All of the pupils selected to be part of the BBC are influential within the school community and the idea is to give them responsibilities to enable them to succeed in school but also to become positive role models to others. For example, the school sets up the BBC budget but students are given the opportunity to decide how to spend part of it (e.g. on a product of their choice to sell on business training day).

BBC members are given a special badge to wear at school so other children know that they belong to the BBC. BBC members are empowered to behave as role models to other children. They are responsible for reporting back to their peers and to their parents about the opportunities they have been given as BBC members. Part of this is done by producing a newsletter and an audio-diary every year.

Outcomes

Members of the BBC have become positive role models around the school and everyone now wants to be part of it. As a result, pupils overall behave better so they get a chance to become a BBC member in future (positive knock on effect).

The BBC initiative is part of a wider effort to reduce exclusions at Preston Manor School. Other projects are taking place but the BBC has already contributed significantly to a decrease in the rate of fixed term exclusions from 86 in 2012/13 to just 35 so far this year - a dramatic reduction.

Case Study 2. Raising ethnic minority staff aspirations through mentoring and professional development - The Open University

Background

Equality information gathered between 2008 and 2011 through staff surveys identified that a higher proportion of ethnic minority staff intended to leave the Open University (OU) and were not as satisfied at work as white staff. Subsequent qualitative research identified that a disproportionate number of ethnic minority staff felt isolated and had less access to influential networks and senior leaders.

In order to remedy this, the OU has committed to 'increase the satisfaction of ethnic minority staff as part of its equality objectives to support compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. To make this objective specific and measurable, the OU developed the following two key performance indicators:

Reduce the difference in intention to leave between white and ethnic minority staff from 14 percent in 2010 to 10 percent in the next staff survey following December 2014

Reduce the difference in overall job satisfaction between white and ethnic minority staff from nine percent in 2010 to six percent in the next staff survey following December 2014

Action taken

The following two mentoring programmes were launched in 2011 and 2012 respectively:

The Aspire~ Plus programme to enable staff who completed the Aspire programme to participate in peer-buddying and work shadowing with senior leaders and to attend additional development workshops.

The Aspire~ programme which enabled ethnic minority staff to be mentored by a senior manager, to participate in development workshops as well as to attend personal development planning and networking events.

Both programmes took place over the course of nine months and both were championed by the vice-chancellor and the director of human resources.

Outcomes

Nearly 50 staff participated in the Aspire programme and around 30 in the Aspire Plus programme. Without exception, all participants reported an increase in confidence and felt that the programmes had been valuable to their professional development.

In effect, more than 20 percent of participants felt that these programmes were key to their success in being appointed to more senior roles or to new roles that better suited their aspirations. A larger number reported been given additional responsibilities and recognition in their current role.

Mentors also acknowledged the value of reverse-mentoring and felt that they developed valuable coaching skills, particularly through attending briefings and through the yearly mentoring master-class hosted by the vice-chancellor.

The OU has met and even exceeded its targets, two years earlier than expected. The staff survey conducted in 2013 showed a reduction in the difference between white staff compared to ethnic minority staff in:

- Overall job satisfaction from nine percent in 2010 to four percent (original target was 6 percent by 2014)
- Intention to leave from 14 percent to 10 percent.

Now the OU is aiming to increase the representation of ethnic minority staff in senior leadership roles from six percent in 2013 to eight percent by the end of 2016.

Note

Since 2012, the Aspire~ programme has been extended to include disabled staff after they raised similar concerns to ethnic minorities staff. This initiative is just starting to deliver similar outcomes.

Case Study 3. Supporting job applications from disabled people: improving confidence and work experience for disabled people - Frimley Park Hospital

Background

In its employment equality compliance report for 2010/2011, the Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust) noted that it had received fewer job applications from disabled people than might be expected, given that eight percent of the population in its catchment area is estimated to have a disability.

Although disability is generally underreported among applicants in the job market, the Trust felt that a specific commitment was needed in order to encourage more disabled people to apply for jobs at the Trust. Mindful of the specific duties (under the Public Sector Equality Duty), the hospital defined the following objective to fulfil this aim:

Work with organisations such as the Shaw Trust to place disabled people with the aim of developing skills and confidence to support long-term employment prospects. This includes provision of support for applying for permanent posts within the organisation.

Action taken

In 2012/2013, the hospital contacted the Shaw Trust to ask for curriculum vitae of disabled people who were looking for work placements. The Shaw Trust put forward three

curriculum vitae and the hospital identified placements that would best suit the skills of these individuals. Assistance with job applications/interviews was given at the end of the placements so that the three individuals could apply for temporary and permanent positions within the Trust.

Outcomes

In 2012/13, the Trust reported the following progress: out of the three disabled people appointed through Shaw Trust on work placements, two have now been appointed as temporary staff, and one to a permanent post.

The work placements at the hospital made a significant difference to the lives of those involved. In particular, it has enabled participants to gain skills and confidence to apply for jobs afterwards. One participant stated that it has enabled him to demonstrate his skills in a real workplace which gave him the confidence to apply for a permanent post in the Trust. 'At the interview, I could talk about real work skills I had developed in my placement, something I had previously been unable to do'.

The hospital is still working with the Shaw Trust to continue providing more disabled people with potential job opportunities in the coming years.

For more case study examples, please visit <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/public-sector-providers/case-studies>

Case studies

This section provides examples of how public authorities have used the Public Sector Equality Duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 or under the previous duties in their employment, services or policy making. Where possible, we have highlighted how the PSED enabled public authorities to achieve tangible benefits for their staff and service users including:

Financial benefits: increasing cost-effectiveness and saving resources.

Organisational benefits: increasing transparency or accountability, better decision-making, improving organisational culture.

Social benefits: providing better access to services, increasing social inclusion, preventing discrimination and/or community tensions and tackling stereotypes.

Individual benefits: improving a person's life chances.