

Equalities Forum 19/9/13 Mearns Castle HS 7pm

Minute

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Elaine Green, Convener for Education and Equalities, welcomed those present. M Sneddon, Quality Improvement Officer, explained that Ken McKinlay, Head of Education Services, was present as he now had the Equalities remit.

2. Education Department Equalities Delivery Plan 2013 – 15

M Sneddon gave some detail on the document including how it links to wider ERC documentation (Single Outcome Agreement, Local Improvement Plan etc) and the specific education department agreed outcomes for the period 2013 – 15.

3. Monitoring Racist Incidents

M Sneddon outlined how the education department monitors racist incidents and gathers biannual data on incidents from all schools and pre 5 establishments. She also reminded those present that the department had updated and issued advice cards to all educational staff last session regarding dealing with racist incidents. The figures for the most recent monitoring period on intentional and unintentional racist incidents were then presented. The figures are very low but M Sneddon said that this does not make the department complacent and that the returns are scrutinised and, where necessary, followed up.

4. Equality Impact Assessments

M Sneddon explained the process of equality impact assessment and how all new and updated policies must be assessed. Cllr Green added that no policy or strategy document would be accepted by the Education Committee without being equality impact assessed.

5. Future Equalities Provision

Some discussion took place about the nature and focus of the Equalities Forum and how this might be developed. It was felt that the forum provided an important opportunity for equalities issues in the widest sense and that the format could differ throughout an academic session.

Suggestions were that there could be one forum per session where the parental reps and the schools equalities coordinators came together, that there could be an annual event for the sharing of best practice with schools presenting, that schools equalities coordinators could perhaps present on equalities issues at a parent council meeting, and that perhaps the parent council chairs meeting could be addressed to heighten the profile of the forum equalities issues in general.

M Sneddon and K McKinlay will follow up on all of this.

