Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion

Third edition
2011
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1. Context

‘Over recent years, since the publication of the Every Child Matters framework, a quiet revolution in children’s services has been unfolding in local communities around the country – with schools, health, children’s services, police and other services working together to put children at the heart of local provision.’ (The Children’s Plan Two Years On)

Internationally, nationally and regionally, inclusion has been prominent on the agenda for several years. In the UK, for example, the Green Paper Every Child Matters requires all those who work with children, young people and their families to ensure their working practices embrace the inclusion of all. This principle has been further elaborated in Every Child Matters: Change for Children and is enshrined in the Children’s Act 2004. Progress will be achieved through critically applying the principles of inclusion to all activities, and by striving to ensure cohesion and continuity between the services accessed by children, young people and their families.

Concurrent with the drive towards inclusion, increasing emphasis has been placed on the achievement, in its broadest sense, for all learners. There is evidence that, at LA-level, inclusion is compatible with high achievement and at school-level, there are differences in attainment between schools but a causal link with inclusion has not been established. It has been advised that schools and LAs should monitor, with care, both their progress towards inclusion, as well as attainment and achievement. The prime focus of these materials is on inclusion but within the context of attainment and achievement, applying both these terms in a broad sense.

2. Concept of Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion

2 http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/
4 http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/20040031.htm
5 http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/ACFC9F.pdf
The first two versions of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion, which were supported through the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Partnership, were intended to support, at Local Authority (LA) level, the development of self-audit tools. They drew upon work already undertaken within the region and other national initiatives.

The third edition represents a change in three ways, as set out below. First, the expectations outlined were raised to reflect the growing confidence in and capacity for inclusion in educational settings. Second, they more explicitly ensured that the concept of inclusion was considered in relation to any potentially vulnerable group. (The origins of the RQSF1 were strongly linked to special educational needs/disability.) Third, in line with government policy, they were designed so that they could be applied to educational settings in a wide sense rather than being restricted to schools.

The development of the two editions of Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion has provided:

- Opportunities to share practice and learn from others more formally;
- A framework for rigorous self-evaluation;
- Peer moderation of own work; and
- Clear evidence for inspection purposes of self-evaluation and collaboration with other Local Authorities (LAs).

Within some LAs, they have also provided the basis for a shared agenda across services as new ways of working are forged, in response to the Every Child Matters Agenda. They have contributed to the development of integrated services with the aim of ensuring inclusion.

From the outset, it was recognised that there would be a need to regularly update the Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion for a number of reasons including

- Evolving understandings of inclusion;
- Experience gained through the endorsement process;
- Changes in the structures of and relationships between services for children, young people and their families;

The original set of principles was that the RQSfI are:

- voluntary;
- collaborative\(^6\);
- challenging;
- supportive of local initiatives;
- rigorous;
- designed to contribute to evaluation and monitoring.

These principles have stood the test of time and remain unaltered.

However, it has been necessary to develop a new funding structure. Whilst the RQSfI remain open access, only those LA who have joined the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Inclusion Network were eligible to contribute to the revision of the RQSfI. Consultation occurred both via Email and face-to-face over a period of several months. (Details of the membership and how to join can be found @ http://www.education.leeds.ac.uk/people/staff.php?staff=58.)

This third edition is intended to be applicable across a range of settings or provision in a range of circumstances. The criteria are that:

“The inclusion self-audit tool should be part of the Children & Young People’s Plan for services which work together to secure the five outcomes for children and young people. It will be applicable to any

\(^6\) This includes the sharing of documentation with other LAs in the region.
setting or provision whose purpose is to ensure an inclusive approach to delivering the five outcomes.”

By implication the design, implementation and reviewing of any self audit tool will involve more than one service or provision, which is consistent with the Single Equality Scheme7 (http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/des/).

4. USE OF THE REGIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS FOR INCLUSION

The Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion are voluntary and can be used in a number of ways.

Some LAs may decide simply to use them as a useful reference point and an example of good practice. However, the Standards are also linked to a process that will lead to the endorsement of the self-review frameworks developing in the region. Engagement in the endorsement process is seen as having a range of significant benefits including:

- Sharing of good practice between LAs;
- Peer support between LAs;
- Formal recognition of the quality of work undertaken within LAs;
- Consistency of standards across the LA;
- Formative feedback;
- Gaining advice about the sustainability of the LA approach;
- Celebration of good practice.

Self-review frameworks which are validated will be awarded with a certificate and will be entitled to use the logo linked to this scheme on their materials, for the three year period of endorsement. Those who wish to engage in this process should refer to the details in Section 7.

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7 http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/des/
5. Current Position
Members who have subscribed to this scheme can seek endorsement of their self audit frameworks. To support that process, the materials used at an endorsement meeting for EducationBradford are available on the website http://www.education.leeds.ac.uk/modx/people/staff/academic/pearson

6. Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion

Bodies seeking endorsement must be full members of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion Network (i.e. have a current subscription to the Network). There are two sets of standards: ‘processes and ‘content’, both of which must be met for an inclusion self audit framework to be endorsed.

A) Standards for Processes

Most services and provisions will be familiar with and confident about self-review processes. In collecting this information, since the focus of this self-review is on inclusion, particular characteristics should be evident. Evidence of these will be a requirement for their inclusion self-audit to be endorsed.

Setting or provision level

Introduction and awareness raising related to the self-audit has taken place.

There must be evidence of a clear planning cycle that is:

- Evidence based;
- An inclusive, participatory approach;
- A multi-agency approach;
- Links to other initiatives;
- Sustainable;
- Supported by a critical friend
LA or regional level

There must be clear evidence of:

- This development being part of the Children and Young People’s Plan (or equivalent);
- Introduction and awareness raising related to self-audit for inclusion;
- Planning, monitoring and evaluation of the self-audit process;
- Active support at a senior level of the self-audit, including embedding the self-audit process in other approaches and initiatives;
- A multi-agency contribution for example, participation at design stage, involvement in schools’ and settings’ self-audit and collaboration between services;
- A commitment to developing practice regionally⁸;
- Regular reviews of the impact of the self-audit process at LA and at setting or provision level.

B) EVIDENCE OF THE CONTENT OF THE SELF-AUDIT TOOL

The endorsement group will be relatively flexible about the form of evidence presented to an endorsement panel but it should be clear and robust. As a minimum, it should include:

- A copy of the self-audit tool including a statement about the application (e.g. early years, all educational settings)⁹;
- Information about its development (i.e. start date, who was involved, consultation activities, launch, training);
- A plan of how a setting or provision would engage in the process:
- Report from the critical friend (see Appendix 1):
- Statement about the LA’s stance on inclusion;
- Evidence of how the self-audit tool is embedded in other LA policies, procedures and activities;

⁸ This includes attendance at RQSfI meetings.

⁹ All members of the endorsement panel will need a copy of this document.

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● Evidence of some settings or provisions having completed one cycle:
● Mapping of the content of the self-audit tool onto the regional standards; and
● Evidence that resources have been allocated to ensure the implementation and sustainability of the approach.

 Appropriately different groups collate their material in different ways. To accommodate this, those seeking endorsement will be sent a proforma that lists the requirements with spaces for the LA to indicate where the evidence can be found.

Representatives of those seeking endorsement should be prepared to elaborate on particular aspects where this is requested. When LAs are preparing for endorsement, they should consider which individuals can contribute effectively to their presentation so that a comprehensive account is provided.

C) STANDARDS FOR CONTENT

There are ten identified themes that are based on the original Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion, other chartermarks, self-review frameworks and current understandings. The order in which these appear is not indicative of the priority accorded to them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Inclusive ethos</th>
<th>F. Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Policy-driven inclusive practice</td>
<td>G. Partnership with the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Active participation</td>
<td>H. Multi-agency working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Personal and professional development</td>
<td>I. Evidence-based practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Resources</td>
<td>J. Transitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The regional standards do not seek to impose this particular framework on locally developed self-review documents. It is recognised that different themes or categories may be used. However, the above list represents a minimum requirement, and LAs seeking endorsement will need to provide clear evidence that their documentation makes reference to all ten themes.
Each of these elements should relate to all, with explicit attention to vulnerable individuals and groups.

Some guidance has been provided below. For each theme (in italics) there is an elaboration of what is meant by it. This is followed by examples of statements which are indicative, and endorsement does not depend on exact replication of any of these. Alternative, locally generated statements are welcome. Equally, evidence can be collated from other activities (e.g. other self-audit tools) so that duplication is avoided.

7. Guidance on content

This section provides clarification of the meaning behind the terms used to describe the content. Each of the bullet points is provided for illustrative purposes only and it is anticipated that each self audit tool will express the content in slightly different ways to reflect local and contemporary circumstances.

A. Inclusive ethos

_The setting or provision is welcoming, respectful and responsive to all, and ensures the safety and well-being of all._

- Leadership at all levels is dedicated to ensuring equality, inclusion and well-being of every individual;
- The nature and quality of the interactions between adult/adult, adult/children and young people and amongst children and young people are constructive and inclusive;
- Diversity is viewed positively, and human rights are defended and applied.
- The admission (and referral) policies demonstrate a commitment to access for all;
- From the first point of contact, the setting or provision is welcoming, friendly and accessible with open, transparent lines of communication.
- Systematic efforts are made to develop and retain confidence between stakeholders.
- Work is undertaken to ensure that there is a shared understanding of and vocabulary about inclusion.
B. Policy driven inclusive practice

The guiding principles on which the provision is planned, monitored and evaluated are clearly articulated and include reference to vulnerable groups.

- There is a collective responsibility for developing a shared vision and understanding of effective, inclusive practice;
- There are systems for monitoring, evaluating and further developing inclusive policy and practice;
- There is an on-going process for the development of policy and practice;
- The links between policy and practice are explicitly examined;
- For national initiatives, there is evidence of policy and procedure development in line with government policy and in adherence to published timelines.
- There is a sympathetic application of policies which recognises diversity of needs and abilities.

C. Active participation

Inclusive opportunities are provided for all, to both individually and collectively contribute to planning, monitoring, evaluation and decision making.

- Information is made available and accessible so that children/young people and adults are well informed and thereby empowered so that they can actively participate.
- There is an on-going process of appropriate consultation and involvement of children/young people and adults with evidence of how their views are taken into account;
- The provision or setting ensures the active involvement of all at various levels (e.g. individual pupils, development of policies, review and evaluation);
- There are explicit links between voice and influence, including demonstrable responses;
- Children and young people are encouraged to reflect on their own progress and achievement, and to develop realistic but challenging targets and ambitions;
• The confidence of the various stakeholders in the systems should be monitored and enhanced.

D. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal and professional development support inclusion through enabling all to respond positively and with confidence to diversity.

• Professional development activities should enable the whole workforce and the Governing Body (or equivalent) to respond to diversity in children and young people;
• All staff are supported to feel part of a broader child and family centred workforce;
• Professional development is comprehensive including induction and continuing professional development;
• Professional development anticipates and responds to changes in the user group, and national policies and initiatives;
• Attention is given to values, attitudes and beliefs.

E. RESOURCES

Resources are used transparently and effectively to achieve positive inclusive outcomes.

• There is clear information available to all on available resources and how to access them;
• Resource allocation, monitoring and evaluation (e.g. provision mapping) consider individual needs and planned outcomes;
• A link is established between the available data and the development of inclusion.
• All stakeholders and services users are involved, at an appropriate level, in planning the allocation and use of resources.
• Resources should be used to minimise the barriers to learning.
F. Access
Focussed attention is given to ensuring access to the curriculum, physical environment and information.

- There is compliance with the requirements with relevant legislation and guidance\(^{10}\);
- Use is made of the materials and approaches available from the Department for Education, and other government bodies and voluntary bodies;
- The curriculum\(^{11}\) is made accessible to all;
- Where appropriate, the access to information is compliant with the regional standards for providing information to parents/carers.

G. Partnership with the community
The setting or provision actively engages with its community responding to its diversity.

- The management/leadership is aware of all potential service users and encourages their attendance at the school or setting;
- The setting or provision has strategies for fostering working partnerships with all members of the local community and responds to their aspirations and needs;
- The setting or provision supports schemes to provide positive role models and images that reflect the diversity in the community.

H. Multi-agency working
The setting or provision works in partnership with statutory, voluntary and other groupings to achieve the five outcomes for all children and young people.

\(^{10}\) The remit of self-audit tools varies across LA but each LA should be able to demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation and guidance.

\(^{11}\) ‘Curriculum’ is used in a broad sense and not restricted to the National Curriculum.
The setting or provision has clear and comprehensive links with relevant agencies and strives to develop mutually supportive relationships;

Partnership opportunities are identified and maximised;

The setting or provision shares relevant information promptly and efficiently with other parties, and where appropriate complies with the national quality framework for the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process.\(^\text{12}\)

I. EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

The setting or provision actively monitors and responds to a wide range of indicators, from a range of perspectives, to ensure the five outcomes for all.

- Benchmarking data is used to identify individuals, groups and trends;
- The effectiveness of the provision is regularly evaluated;
- Data is shared in line with the information sharing protocols;
- Settings and provisions constantly seek to acknowledge and celebrate achievements;
- Evidence is shared with stakeholders as part of an overall approach aimed at establishing and maintaining the confidence of all stakeholders.

J. TRANSITIONS

All transitions\(^\text{13}\) are negotiated with partners and effectively managed.

- Settings or provisions proactively work with other settings or provisions;

\(^{12}\) National quality framework for the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process @ http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00662/

\(^{13}\) These will include, but are not limited to, transition between classes, phases, settings, or LAs.
• For individuals, there is a multi-agency approach to transitions;
• Person-centred approaches to transition are encouraged;
• The approaches developed should be in line with and informed by the National Transitions Support Programme\(^{14}\);
• Where organisational changes are planned, sufficient time and resource is allocated to the transition process.

7. Endorsement Process and How to Become Involved

The endorsement panel is co-ordinated by the School of Education at University of Leeds, and can meet several times each year. Representatives of those LAs or groups which have subscribed to the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion Network are eligible to attend these meetings. The endorsement panel is composed of representatives from groups that have been endorsed. Each endorsement panel will include individuals from an appropriate range of professional backgrounds.

Those who are endorsed are entitled to use the Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion logo for a period of three years. (The use of this logo is restricted to those who have been endorsed.) All LA or other group who are endorsed also commit to support the scheme by permitting one or more officers to giving time to it (one or two days per year).

A set of procedures has been developed. These are set out in Figure 1. This is intended to formalise peer support, ensure that LAs who present to the endorsement panel are likely to be successful, and clarify the time commitments of all those involved.

\(^{14}\) National Transition Support Team @ http://www.transitionsupportprogramme.org.uk/
Express interest in taking part in endorsement process (contact details are at the end of the document).

A LA which believes it is ready for endorsement should contact Sue Pearson at School of Education, University of Leeds who will identify a critical friend. (All those seeking endorsement must be members of the RQSfI Network)

A preliminary visit (half a day) by the critical friend will occur at a mutually convenient date. Prior to that meeting, the LA provides the critical friend with the draft self-review (Appendix 2) and associated paperwork. (This should be two weeks prior to the visit).

At the endorsement panel meeting, an evidence-based judgement will be reached. Endorsement will be valid for three years. The LA and the critical friend will present the evidence to a panel of 2/3 LA officers, chaired by a convener from the University of Leeds.

Feedback will be given to each LA. Successful LAs will receive a certificate from the regional partnership and be entitled to use the logo.
8. Re-endorsement

Endorsement lasts for three years and Local Authorities will need to seek re-endorsement by the end of that period. They will be contacted well in advance to ensure that they have adequate planning time.

Re-endorsement will be against whichever edition of the Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion is in operation at that time.

A critical friend will guide the Local Authority through the process and advise the Endorsement Panel.

The Endorsement Panel will need evidence in a very similar format to that outlined in this documentation but should give particular attention to

- processes involved in developing their revised materials,
- the aims and nature of the revisions,
- steps taken to ensure the sustainability of the approach, and
- any data they have collected about the impact of their approach.

Where a Local Authority does not seek re-endorsement or does not meet the criteria, they will be formally notified that their endorsement has lapsed.

The evidence is that re-endorsement of the Regional Quality Standards for Inclusion (3rd edition) presents Local Authorities with an appropriate level of challenge but also the opportunity to celebrate their progress.
Appendix 1

Critical friend

The role of the critical friend is to support an LA in the preparation for an endorsement panel meeting. The critical friend will be experienced in the Regional Quality Standards and may well have been through the endorsement process themselves.

LAs who are involved in the scheme are expected to commit resources to allow their staff to act as critical friends. The time involved would normally be some preparatory reading time, visit to the LA, advice to the LA and attendance at the endorsement panel meeting. In total this should be around 2 days.
## Appendix 1: Critical Friend Visits

It is assumed that some paperwork will have been supplied to the critical friend prior to the visit. This should be at a mutually convenient time and it is estimated that it will take 1.5 to 2 hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>What is the LA’s perspective on inclusion with, if possible, supporting documentation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which members of staff have been/are involved including roles/responsibilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does this activity link to other initiatives/agendas e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ECM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• JARs/SEF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• SEN monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Healthy Schools etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where within the LA is this work reported/line managed?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development process</th>
<th>How long has this work been developing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who has been involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there shared responsibility?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there evidence of a developmental process?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who is the self-evaluation tool intended for? (e.g. phase/sector)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Links to RQSiF</th>
<th>Matrix mapping local tool to regional standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information about additions/differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depth of match (i.e. is a topic simply mentioned or is it dealt with in a systematic, rigorous way?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trialing</th>
<th>Was there a pilot version?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What evidence is there of feedback – and responses to feedback?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a cycle been completed? (This is required.) Are there any associated training materials?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strength of evidence</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the scheme involve evidence from more than one source?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the arrangements for visits?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are pupils’ and parents’ perspectives accessed and taken into account?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any data about local trends that links to this activity? (e.g. changes in the placement of pupils?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intended outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the tool link to the LA’s stated aims in relation to inclusion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the schedule for engaging schools/settings? How will they be recruited?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What about the ‘hard to reach’ schools/settings?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What evidence is there of impact? Hard/soft evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctive features</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on your current knowledge of other self-evaluation for inclusion schemes, is there anything distinctive about this scheme?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Future plans</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the planned review cycle for the scheme?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which are areas for future development?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What plans to accommodate any constraints?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional information</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there anything that you would like to draw to our attention that hasn’t been covered by these questions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideally when would you like to present this to the RQSI endorsement panel?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*January 2011*
### Development Group Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Lead Officer within the LA</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact details</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development group members (with designation and contact details)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Development group key meetings

(Minutes should be available)

Target group for this process (e.g. schools/early years/geographical area)
**Standards for Process**

How was the chartermark concept introduced to schools/settings and how have they been included in its development?

What impact measures have been selected and how is the **LA** measuring these?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How are schools/settings monitored and what are the quality assurance mechanisms?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What links exist with other initiatives? (Evidence should be available)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards for Contents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy driven inclusive practice</td>
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<td>Active participation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal and professional development</strong></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership with the community</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-agency working</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence-based practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 3 Contact details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Email address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jean Basson</td>
<td>Education Leeds</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jean.basson@educationleeds.co.uk">jean.basson@educationleeds.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Pearson</td>
<td>University of Leeds</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.e.pearson@education.leeds.ac.uk">s.e.pearson@education.leeds.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>