



Western
Learning
Federation



Riverbank School

EQUALITY PLAN



Learning together to be the best we can

RATIFIED BY GOVERNORS 16th November 2022

DATE REVIEWED 16th November 2022

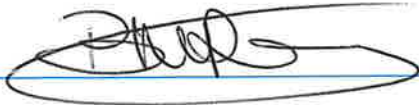
DATE FOR REVIEW 16th November 2024

DATE PUBLISHED 16th November 2022

Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually unless change of circumstances or legislation requires it to be amended earlier.

SIGNED



DATE

22/12/23

Chair of Governors

SIGNED

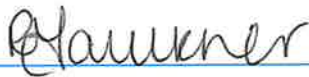


DATE

21/12/23

Executive Headteacher

SIGNED



DATE

21.12.23

Deputy Executive Headteacher

SIGNED



DATE

20.12.23

Head of School

The values and principles

The federation is underpinned by a set of values that define the culture of the three federated schools.

Our Principles

Honesty

Responsibility

Positivity

Trust

Empathy

Patience

Respect

Kindness

Our Values

- We celebrate our differences.
- We have a shared sense of belonging.
- We play, laugh, smile and celebrate success.
- We have a positive attitude.
- We learn from experiences to develop life and independent skills.
- We follow our dreams and aspirations.
- We care for our own and wider environment.
- We improve quality of life.

Definition

Values One's judgement of what is important in school life.

Principles Morally correct behaviour and attitudes.

Rights Respecting Schools

Every child has rights "without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status"

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1. Introduction to our school

Riverbank is an English medium special school for children aged 4-11 years of age. Admissions are managed by Cardiff Local Authority. The school caters for 70 pupils. All of our pupils come from Cardiff. 64% of our pupils are boys and 36% are girls. 54% of our pupils are eligible for free school meals and all of our pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Pupils are from a range of ethnic backgrounds. 56% are White British. The other 44% are from 20 ethnic backgrounds including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Somali, Nigerian, Polish, Kurdish and Romanian. 31% are classed as having English as an additional language (EAL).

The primary need of the pupils at Riverbank is a Severe Learning Difficulty, Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties; General Learning Difficulties; Physical and Medical Needs or Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Pupils are grouped into classes with consideration to their wellbeing, academic, communication, social and behavioural needs. The Riverbank curriculum is skill focussed and provides differentiated learning opportunities for groups of learners according to their stage of development and academic ability. All pupils work towards skills from the Foundation Phase.

A majority of teaching and non-teaching staff are White British. We have one teacher who speaks Welsh and one who speaks German. Two of our teaching staff are male with the majority of all staff being female.

We comply with the Local Authority Recruitment policy and procedure which monitors sexual orientation of staff however we do not hold enough information to form a picture of our school.

All people, their faith, cultures, communities and languages are valued equally by the school.

2. Aims

We recognise and celebrate the fact that British and Welsh society is made up of people from diverse backgrounds and life experiences. It is important that all pupils are prepared to

live in such a society. The purpose of our Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) is to fulfil the duties to promote equality for people with protected characteristics and embed fairness and equality at the heart of our school community and in all aspects of our school plans and policies.

We aim to achieve, through purposeful partnerships, a high quality education for all pupils.

Through the equality improvement actions and strategically planned tasks detailed in this document we aim to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relationships between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The purpose of Riverbank School is to create a professional environment in which pupils can receive their curriculum entitlement. We have high expectations and hope to enable pupils to achieve the following goals:

- High achievement for all, regardless of ability, gender, class or ethnicity
- To learn how to learn and to learn how to play
- To gain the best possible level of independence appropriate to their age and ability
- To be able to make appropriate and informed choices
- To be aware of danger and the need for safety at all times
- To be able to communicate in a range of settings and for different audiences
- To be able to behave and respond appropriately in a range of different situations, with regard for the feelings and wellbeing of others
- To celebrate success and be aware of their own strengths and skills, leading to raised self-esteem.

In order to achieve these goals, we begin with the individual needs of the child. These needs encompass the whole child – not just the academic, but also the social, behavioural, medical and moral needs.

- We ensure that our curriculum is delivered at the appropriate level to meet these needs.
- We believe that it is not simply a case of what we deliver, but also the way in which we deliver it.
- We aim to use pupil's strengths, the strengths of adults around them and the environment to enhance and provide the opportunities for learning and success.
- Through the assessment of our pupils needs, abilities and levels of attainment, we record and report on progress and inform our planning of the curriculum.
- We monitor and evaluate the pupils learning and our teaching in order to continually strive to raise standards

This SEP belongs to everybody and is relevant to all pupils, teaching and support staff, parents, carers, supporters and the local community.

The Equality Act 2010 gives us the framework for this plan. The Human Rights Act 1998, the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 are also relevant to this policy.

We have based our strategic equality objectives on local, regional and national priorities within education as well as feedback from engagement with our school community and our own school data. These actions are set out in section 12.

3. Equality vision and equality objectives

The Equality Act 2010 required all schools to have equality objectives in place. These objectives cover all the following protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation and include the Welsh language in Wales. Actions to achieve these objectives are in the action plan at the end of this document and have been included as an initiative or action in school development plans.

These are the equality objectives we are currently pursuing in line with our self-evaluation report and school improvement plan:

- To further develop the quality and use of our Equality Monitoring and Data Collection
- To teach and train our pupils, staff and governors about the principles and practice of equality, diversity and anti-discrimination.

Additionally:

- We aim to reduce gaps in attainment and attendance between pupils from protected groups when/if they occur.
- We aim to maintain the position currently where we have no incidents of identity based bullying in our school.

We have strategically planned tasks to enable us to meet these objectives. They are listed in section 12 of this SEP in the form of an Action Plan. They cover all relevant protected characteristics.

4. Scope

The policy applies to all full time, part time, job share, permanent, temporary and supply staff. It applies to all pupils, parents, service users and visitors to the school in line with equality legislation and the school's legal responsibility to promote equality in employment, education and access to services.

Our school is open to everyone. We will not discriminate in our admissions criteria, in providing education and access to any benefit, service or facility either directly or indirectly, against anybody with a protected characteristic.

We will not discriminate on the grounds of:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

- And the Welsh language in Wales.

Age is the ninth protected characteristic. In our school context it applies to everyone apart from our pupils.

Opportunities in our school will be of an equally high standard for everybody.

The school's duty to our pupils goes beyond just the formal education. It covers all school activities such as extra-curricular and leisure activities, sports activities and school trips, as well as school facilities such as libraries and IT facilities etc.

We will mainstream equality through the curriculum in our choice of diverse and challenging materials and activities. We will support children to examine their lives and personal identity. This is in the light of people's experiences that are both similar and different to them.

The images we use will reflect the diversity of society in a positive way so to meet the third duty of the equality act – to promote good relationships between people. We will not omit or avoid certain equality issues because to do so would be to promote a false picture of the people of Cardiff.

We will welcome people across the protected characteristics to our school to share their skills and experience. We will make sure that we make all people feel welcome.

The school has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils. This duty is anticipatory. Riverbank will submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make any reasonable adjustments to the service the school provides for their disabled students.

5. The National Equality Agenda

The following pieces of legislation are at the heart of the equality agenda.

The Equality Act 2010

The nine protected characteristics of the 2010 equality act include everybody; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act sets down public sector duties that apply to all the school's functions:

- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good community relations
- Eliminating discrimination.

Specific Public sector duties for Wales are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory duties) (Wales) regulations 2011, as issued by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Human Rights Act 1998

Human rights and equality are intrinsically linked. Equality is treated as a fundamental human right, from the principle of equality and respect for the inherent dignity of all people.

Article 14 of the Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination on any grounds such as gender, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or any other status.

The words "any other status" have been used to cover amongst other things sexual orientation, illegitimacy, marital status, trade union membership, transsexualism, disability, carers and imprisonment.

Article 14 can only be used when attached to a complaint relating to another article of convention such as article 3: Right to life, liberty and security of person or article 8: Right to a private and family life, home and correspondence.

In some instances, the Human Rights Act 1998 gives greater rights to people than other equality legislation because it judges treatment against a fixed standard and does not rely on comparison between treatment of one group of people and another.

The Welsh Language Act 1993 & The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

The Welsh language has official status and belongs to all the people of Wales. The Welsh Language Measure puts the Welsh and English language on a basis of equality. The Welsh Education Scheme was approved by Cardiff Council in 2009 and applies to all schools. The principles of the Scheme and the Plan are similar in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations and we will take the Welsh language into account alongside all the protected characteristics.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Section 26 of the counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies ("specified authorities" including schools and registered childcare providers) to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

In fulfilling the duty in section 26 of the Act, all specified authorities are expected to participate fully in work to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Specified authorities are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This should be based on an understanding, shared with partners, of the potential risk in the local area.

Specified authorities will need to demonstrate that they are protecting children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies in place to identify children at risk, intervening as appropriate.

Specified authorities should make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups.

The duty is likely to be relevant to fulfilling other responsibilities such as the duty arising from section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6. Discrimination

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination. The school will make sure that nothing we do discriminates against any person or persons on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Human Rights are applicable to all people in relation to the school.

There are four kinds of illegal discrimination, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. They apply to service delivery and employment across the protected characteristics:

1. **Direct Discrimination** – Where a person treats another less favourably because of a protected characteristic e.g. Refusing to admit a child because they are Roma
2. **Combined Direct (Dual) Discrimination** – Where a person is treated less favourably because of a combination of protected characteristics e.g. A school excludes a pupil because they are black and male.

Discrimination based on association is now illegal. Direct discrimination occurs when you treat a pupil/person less favourably because of their association with another pupil/person who has a protected characteristic e.g. Their brother is a disabled person.

Discrimination based on perception is now illegal. Direct discrimination also occurs when you treat a pupil/person less favourably because you mistakenly think they have a protected characteristic e.g. Discrimination against a young person who is believed to be gay even if they are not.

3. **Indirect Discrimination** – When a policy or practice is apparently neutral but the effect places a group of pupils/people at a significant disadvantage e.g. A rigid school dress code that does not account for items of clothing linked to religion.
4. **Discrimination Arising from Disability** – Where a person is treated less favourably because of something related to their impairment e.g. A pupil with a learning disability is disciplined for not obeying a rule that they hadn't understood because they didn't understand the sign.

Harassment including Bullying

The school's work around personal and social education will help build a school community that understands and enjoys equality and diversity.

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from harassment. Harassment is unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

The school has a responsibility to protect pupils, prospective pupils, former pupils, employees etc. from harassment. The school will be proactive in protecting people by raising awareness, training teachers and pupils, encouraging people to report harassment and will deal with problems as they arise.

Harassment now includes **harassment based on association** i.e. A friend of a disabled person or **perception** i.e. mistakenly believed to be Muslim.

Where there are instances of bullying in and associated with the school, we will deal with instances promptly and sensitively. We recognise that instances are motivated by prejudice against people of a particular characteristic, or bullying that affects one group of people in particular, has a greater negative effect, both for the people involved and for the school community.

Victimisation

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from victimisation on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics. Victimisation is when a person subjects another person to detriment because they have done, or believed that they will do a 'protected act'.

A 'protected act' are acts that include giving information or evidence under the Equality Act 2010, bringing proceedings, or making an allegation in relation to the Act, as long as they have done so in good faith. That is, they thought they were being honest.

Discrimination

Name calling, physical attacks, threats, the spreading of false rumours in person and on-line are all made more serious when a person is victimised for who they are. We know that discrimination and prejudice re particularly damaging to the individual as well as to family, friends and the community. The school will take incidents of discrimination seriously and treat sensitively. False allegations are also taken seriously.

We will take an active role where discrimination is identified and it involves our employees, pupils or premises. Incidents on school transport or outside school negatively affect our pupils as much as incidents in school and we will tackle it where it is made known.

Discrimination involving adults is treated differently to discrimination involving pupils and young people. All adults are fully responsible for their actions. Children and young people may need support and education in matters to do with prejudice and discrimination and as such we will try to find solutions that involve the whole group and avoid criminalising individuals because of their actions. We will work with partners to find solutions, in particular when incidents are complicated or involve a wider group of people.

7. Equalities Summary Statement

At Riverbank School we aim to provide a happy, caring environment in which all children can feel confident and able to learn. We seek to foster an environment of mutual respect and support between all staff, pupils, parents and carers and the wider community.

Our school is committed to eliminating all unlawful discrimination on grounds of race, gender, transgender, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or age by creating an environment where every individual regardless of ability or background is able to participate and is valued fully as a member of the school community. Being opposed to all forms of discrimination and prejudice we promote a positive attitude towards differences and expect respect for pupil of all backgrounds.

The school aims to be a fair employer and promote a friendly working culture. Without committed enthusiasm, skilled and empowered people the school cannot succeed. We will create a healthy, safe and supportive working environment where people are respected for who they are and employees can perform at their best.

We will make every reasonable endeavour to meet employees' requests relating to a protected characteristic including dress, food, holidays, prayer times, work patterns, leave, support, physical adaptations etc. in order not to discriminate.

Any language or behaviour which is racist, sexist, homophobic, disablist or potentially damaging to any group will not be tolerated and will be challenged and monitored.

8. Responsibilities

Leadership and Management

Commitment

The Federated Governing Body (FGB), Executive Head teacher and leadership teams from across the three schools will work with all partners to be proactive in promoting equal opportunities, fostering good relations and in tackling unlawful discrimination. We will encourage, support and enable all pupils and staff from protected characteristics to reach the highest standards possible.

Federated Governing Body

The FGB is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with Equality legislation and fulfils its legal responsibilities. With assistance from the Executive Head teacher and Heads of School, the FGB will ensure that the policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. The FGB includes equality issues as a regular item on the agenda of Governing Body meetings and has a governor with responsibility for Equal Opportunities who is Binki Rees.

Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for

- Making sure the Equality policy is readily available, along with relevant policies such as the Anti-bullying policy and that governors, staff, pupils, parents and carers know about it.
- Making sure the policy and its procedures are followed.
- Producing regular information for staff and governors about how the policy is working, and providing training for them on the policy if necessary.
- Making sure all staff know their responsibilities and receive training and support in carrying these out.
- Taking appropriate action in cases of harassment and discrimination.
- Making sure the Equality Policy is regularly monitored and reviewed.

The named person with responsibility for dealing with reported incidents of unlawful discrimination is Deborah Herald, Head of School. Staff and pupils are aware of who the named person is. The named person ensures that all reported incidents are recorded in the Equality Incident and Monitoring register, analysed within the school and sent to the Local Authority termly.

The **Equality Co-ordinator** is the Head of School who ensures that the school regularly reviews and evaluates all policies and practices in relation to Equal Opportunities, leading to the setting of targets which address any aspects of inequality or disadvantage in any of the school's activities.

All staff are responsible for:

- Dealing with incidents of unlawful discrimination and bullying
- Being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Promoting equality and good relations between all groups
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination, and taking up training opportunities
- Striving to provide images and lesson plans that show positive images of people from the protected characteristics

We will make sure that all people involved with the school know our equality commitments and their personal duty under it. We will provide suitable training for all staff and pupils. We will encourage employees and governors to continually develop their learning and experience of equality matters through a range of methods including training, shadowing and partnerships.

9. Information Gathering and Engagement

The collection of information is important in supporting us in deciding what actions to take to improve equality and eliminate any discrimination within the school community. The information also helps us subsequently to review our performance, so it needs to be detailed enough to enable us to measure how we are delivering on equality duties. The information also helps us to do accurate impact assessments and identify which of the school's aims have been achieved and what we need to do better.

Engagement is based on the information gained about representation of different groups. We aim to do this as fully as possible. The reason that this progress is important to us is to understand the full range of needs within the school community.

The school consults and involves all the school's stakeholders on matters that concern them, including this plan and the equality objectives. Engaging people will give us evidence to work out how well we are doing in delivering equality. We regularly consult and engage with parents through a variety of means including, questionnaires, newsletters and meetings.

The school has procedures for finding out how pupils think and feel about the school.

We have been mindful of national and regional priorities in Education when setting our objectives and our own equality data and information has been important when setting targets.

10. Publication and Reporting

The school will publish our Strategic Equality Plan on our website and it will be communicated to parents during events at the school. It can be made available in large print and in other formats on request. The school prospectus and the staff handbook includes our Equal Opportunities statement.

We will report and publish annually on the progress made on the action plan and the impact of the plan itself on school ethos and school practices. This is undertaken as part of the Governors Annual Report.

The school will identify, publish and use equalities information each year to show how we are delivering the equality duty. The information we publish will be easy to find and easy to understand.

We will be publishing information on:

- Composition broken down by year group, ethnicity and gender
- Composition broken down by types of disability and special educational need
- Inequality of outcome and participation connected with ethnicity, gender and disability
- Instances of discrimination
- Complaints

Other matters including language needs, behavioural needs, schooling history etc. will be taken into account in analysing data and developing strategies to address equality differences.

11. Monitoring and Review

We will revisit and analyse the information and data used to identify priorities for the Strategic Equality Plan (e.g. achievement data, engagement with stakeholders).

We will use Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that actions taken have a positive impact across all protected characteristics, that the promotion of equality is at the heart of school planning and that discrimination is being eliminated effectively.

Based on the above, we will review the Strategic Equality Plan annually and will republish as necessary. A full review will be undertaken after four years.

12.Strategic Equality Plan

<p>PRIORITY ONE: Using the Quality of Life and Standards, Curriculum and Learning School Panels and Sub-Committee's ensuring that the quality and use of our Equality Monitoring and Data Collection is being reflected and actions highlighted completed.</p>		
<p>SOURCE: (Research/data/engagement/statutory) Equality Act 2010, School Panels, Sub-committee and FGB.</p>		
<p>General duties: Foster good relations, Equality of Opportunity Specific duties: Assessment of Impact; Equality Objectives; Equality Information; Engagement; Accessibility of Information Protected Characteristics: Gender, Race, Sexual Orientation, Transgender, Religion or belief, Disability, Pregnancy and maternity, Age, Welsh Language</p>		
<p>TARGETS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To further develop our understanding of the diversity of our school community of pupils, parents, staff and governors. 2. Work with SRE Curriculum Co-ordinator and school's leadership team to look at data capture. 3. To use this data to build an Equality and Engagement Group (EEG) of parents, staff, governors and where appropriate pupils. 4. To use this data to review the effectiveness of school policies (e.g. anti-bullying, teaching, learning and curriculum) across the protected characteristics with the support of the EEG. 		
<p>SUCCESS CRITERIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We know what equality data we currently collect and use. We also know where gaps exist i.e. what equality data we do not currently collect and use and have actions in place to improve this. • Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out with the support of the EEG • Equality data is collected, analysed and reported on regularly to the EEG and the full Governing Body for the purpose of objective setting • The School Improvement Plan uses equality data to set targets 		
<p>Strategically Planned Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Put in place actions to improve the level of equality data held/not held and used across the protected characteristics for pupils, parents and staff ➢ Timetable the review and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of policies ➢ Identify Equality Officer in Local Authority and liaise to arrange EIA training for key staff and members of the EEG 		<p>Lead person(s) involved</p> <p>SLT & Link Governor</p> <p>SLT & Link Governor Head of School</p>
<p>Strategically Planned Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Put in place actions to improve the level of equality data held/not held and used across the protected characteristics for pupils, parents and staff ➢ Timetable the review and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of policies ➢ Identify Equality Officer in Local Authority and liaise to arrange EIA training for key staff and members of the EEG 		<p>Timescale</p> <p>Sept 22 - July 23</p> <p>Sept 22 - Dec 23 Sept 22 - July 23</p>
<p>MONITORING COMMENTARY (Bullet points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 		<p>EVALUATION COMMENTARY (Bullet points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

PRIORITY TWO: To achieve the Silver Award for the Equalities Award by Equalteach.	
SOURCE: (Research/data/engagement/statutory) Equality Act 2010, The Equalities Award (Silver)	
General duties: Foster good relations; equality of opportunity; eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	
Specific duties: Training	
Protected Characteristics: Gender, Race, Sexual Orientation, Transgender, Religion or belief, Disability, Pregnancy and maternity, Age, Welsh Language	
TARGETS:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with the four main themes of: Leadership and Management, Behaviour and Welfare, Teaching and Learning and Personal Development of Pupils. 2. Policies – The school clear procedures and action plans related to policies and they have been independently scrutinised. 3. Equality objectives are SMART based on monitoring objectives. 4. Prejudice related incidents follow procedure and recording incidents is separate to behaviour log. 5. To educate our young people about equality, and that they have the opportunities to learn about different areas of equality and discrimination and equipped with strategies to prevent them from occurring. 	
SUCCESS CRITERIA:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A learning needs analysis demonstrates improved confidence and skill levels amongst staff. • An improved monitoring system demonstrates a downward trend in racist, sexist, homophobic and other identity based discrimination and harassment over time. • Raise awareness of equality and diversity amongst pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors • Staff surveys evidence improved understanding of equality and diversity issues in schools. • Follow each aspects of the award to ensure that evidence and practice is quality assured. • Work with the SRE co-ordinators to ensure work undertaken is in line with SRE policy and curriculum. 	
Strategically Planned Tasks:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Identify Equality Officer within Local Authority (LA) then liaise to develop a training plan for staff ➢ Liaise with LA Equality Officer to identify resources for teaching and learning ➢ Engage fully with annual events such as Black History Month, International day of Disabled People and similar for all protected characteristics 	
Lead person(s) involved	Timescale
EHT DEHT Head of School	Sept 22- Jan 24 Sept 20 – Jan 24 Sept 22 ongoing

<p>➤ Explore opportunities with Central South Consortium for sharing of best practice</p>		<p>Sept 22</p>
<p>MONITORING COMMENTARY (Bullet points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>EVALUATION COMMENTARY (Bullet points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	