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Briefing: Anti-Racist Education

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Purpose of this briefing

This briefing aims to support EIS members to advocate for better provision of anti-racist education in their educational establishments. The EIS has a commitment to the promotion of sound learning rooted in equality and inclusivity. We oppose racism and all forms of prejudice; we want educational establishments to be safe, inclusive environments for all children, young people and staff.

Young people have the right to learn and teachers and lecturers have the right to work in an educational environment that is free from discrimination.

The briefing paper has two primary aims:

1. **To promote anti-racist education** and support members in reinvigorating this.
2. **To inform members of examples of current anti-racist education practice** in use across Scotland, drawn from consulting members, to enable the sharing of good practice.

Why raise this now?

After the Stephen Lawrence inquiry¹ and the 1999 publication of the resulting Macpherson Report there was a considerable focus on challenging institutional racism across the public sector, including in educational establishments. That focus waned over the years that followed, and although there is now much positive practice, with some establishments making considerable efforts to challenge racism, more needs to be done.

The 2017 EIS AGM passed a resolution which said, *"This AGM calls on Council to promote and re-establish Anti-Racist Education firmly in the curriculum for every year group and sector; including training for all teachers and lecturers in light of the current political climate and as a way to tackle the rise in Racism."*

The debate on this resolution reflected a sense among the membership that anti-racist education has been in decline in recent years. This sentiment has also been repeatedly aired at the annual STUC Black Workers' Conference. One speaker at the 2017 Conference said, *"anti-racist education has fallen off a cliff"*.

¹ Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-stephen-lawrence-inquiry>

The resolution was passed in the wider context of:

- High levels of **racist hate crime**: racial crime remains the most commonly reported hate crime, with 3,349 charges reported in 2016-17² (figures are indicative of the scale the problem, but it should be borne in mind that many incidents are never reported)
- A significant minority holding **negative attitudes towards diversity**: the Scottish Social Attitudes survey³ has found that a third of people in Scotland (33%) said that they would rather live in an area 'where most people are similar to you', and fewer than half (40%) agreed that 'people from outside Britain who come to live in Scotland make the country a better place' (although, it is positive that from 2010 - 2015, there was a 10% decline in the proportion of people who said that they would rather live in an area where most people are similar to them and a 7% increase in the proportion of people agreeing that people from outside Britain who come to live in Scotland make the country better)
- Increasingly **hostile and Islamophobic media coverage** of world events such as the refugee crisis: the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has raised concerns about some British media outlets, particularly tabloid newspapers, using "offensive, discriminatory and provocative terminology" and says that it considers that "hate speech in some traditional [UK] media continues to be a serious problem"⁴
- **Low and declining numbers of minority ethnic teachers** (only 1% of primary teachers and 1.7% of secondary teachers in Scotland come from an ethnic minority background)⁵, suggesting that that Black, Asian and minority ethnic graduates experience barriers to entering the teaching profession, meaning that schools gain less social, cultural and linguistic capital than other more diverse workplaces
- More prominence of **racist and extremist views in political discourse**, associated with e.g. the Trump administration and the 'Brexit' referendum. The ECRI has highlighted this issue, saying, "There continues to be considerable intolerant political discourse" which it links to "an increase in xenophobic sentiments". It reports that "Muslims are similarly portrayed in a negative light by certain politicians and as a result of some government policies" and raises concern about the tenor of discourse on Traveller communities⁶
- The passing of 'counter-terrorism' **legislation which the EIS views as likely to unfairly and disproportionately impact on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people** (e.g. the Prevent duty⁷)
- **Scotland becoming a more diverse nation**, and areas of Scotland that have not previously hosted refugee communities doing so for the first time, often with positive results but with some tensions also

² Hate Crime statistics: <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/media-site/media-releases/1557-hate-crime-in-scotland-2016-17-an-official-statistics-publication-for-scotland>

³ Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2015: Report of Attitudes to Discrimination: <http://www.ssa.natcen.ac.uk/read-the-reports/scottish-social-attitudes-2015/attitudes-to-discrimination-positive-action.aspx>

⁴ ECRI REPORT ON THE UNITED KINGDOM (fifth monitoring cycle), 4 October 2016:

https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/United_Kingdom/GBR-CbC-V-2016-038-ENG.pdf

⁵ Teacher Census: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata/TeaSup2017>

⁶ Paras 33-39, Hate Speech in Political Discourse: https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/United_Kingdom/GBR-CbC-V-2016-038-ENG.pdf

⁷ EIS guidance on the Prevent Duty: <http://www.eis.org.uk/Equality-Policies/Prevent>

- New research on **young people's experiences of racism**, highlighting emerging issues such as 'micro-aggressions' (subtle experiences of racism that happen on a daily basis in public spaces) and 'misrecognition' as Muslim based on ethnicity.⁸ Many young people in the study were highly positive about diversity in Scotland and valued schools as safe places to study and develop friendships but they also described in different ways how they were made to feel as though they did not belong, on the basis of accent, colour, faith, dress, nationality and ethnicity
- New EIS research on **teachers' and lecturers' experiences of racism and Islamophobia**. The EIS conducted a survey of BME members in 2018 on this matter, which found that:
 - o A significant majority (71%, or nearly three-quarters) of all respondents had experienced racism in their capacity as a teacher or lecturer, and the proportion was higher among certain groups (e.g. 83% of African, Caribbean or Black respondents had experienced racism)
 - o Manifestations of racism seen most commonly were racist language used by learners (mentioned over half of respondents) and racist attitudes among learners (mentioned by nearly half); colleagues showing racist attitudes was the third most common observation; and curriculum content which lacks ethnic diversity was cited by four in ten respondents
 - o Many respondents had experienced unhelpful curriculum content. Over four in ten (41%) respondents reported having seen curriculum content which lacks ethnic diversity. This figure was higher among Asian respondents: nearly half had seen curriculum content which lacks ethnic diversity (48%).

All of these matters bring into sharp focus the urgent need for concerted efforts to ensure that anti-racist education pervades Scottish educational establishments.

Making concerted efforts to educate young people against racism as early as possible brings many benefits, for young people, staff and communities.

Anti-racist education is a preventative approach; it is about working to change attitudes and equip learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and challenge racism. It should form part of a **whole-establishment approach** to promoting equality and inclusion.

Policy and legal context

Anti-racist education is supported by the Scottish policy context within education and by equality legislation.

The Equality Act 2010⁹ includes race as a protected characteristic, and offers a wide range of protections from discrimination on the basis of ethnicity. This important legislation includes a Public Sector Equality Duty, which obliges local authorities and public bodies to:

⁸ University of Edinburgh briefing paper: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/education/election-briefings/experiences-of-minority-ethnic>

⁹ The Equality Act overview: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/equality-act-2010>

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The promotion of race equality is also supported by Curriculum for Excellence, the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000, and Getting it Right for Every Child (an aspect of the Children and Young People Act 2014). A race equality lens can be applied to the SHANARRI indicators (especially Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Respected, and Included).

The EIS would advocate for anti-racist approaches to take into account the experiences of staff as well as young people, and reminds members of the inter-relation between the learning and the working environment.

Anti-racist education approaches: current practice

The EIS gathered information from activists about approaches to anti-racist education in their local settings. Some activists reported that they were not aware of any notable practice in their area; or referred to the need for more specific and co-ordinated approaches to anti-racism, taking in, for example, different forms of racism and different target groups.

Virtually all respondents said they were not aware of any professional learning being made available on anti-racist approaches. Most references to training mentioned this being provided in the 1990's or mid 2000's but not more recently. Only one respondent reported recent activity (their Local Association Equality Reps had recently offered professional learning on equalities, which had included content on racism). Some people mentioned the depletion of local authority equality staffing; such teams would once have offered such training, but they have been affected by austerity budgets.

A range of current practice was shared, some examples of which are described below.

Some respondents spoke of the general ethos of the school and of their overall approach to teaching, e.g. "In the school we emphasise respect for everyone and equality in our general school ethos"; and "By bringing particular matters into discussion and responding appropriately to any questions or comments I am supporting anti-racism".

Curricular approaches

- In **English**, pupils have studied:
 - o 'Blood Brothers', and in connection, have studied the place of Liverpool in the slave trade;
 - o the Robert Burns poem 'The Slave's Lament', learning in the process about the slave trade;
 - o racism in football, in light of the statement made by a player who left a high-profile local team due to racism;
 - o 'The Diary of Anne Frank', exploring racism and anti-Semitism;

- Rosa Parks, Barack Obama, JFK, and Will Smith, to bring about some understanding of the Civil Rights movement and current racial tensions in the USA;
- 'Divided City' by Theresa Breslin, exploring sectarianism and racism;
- the issues shown in 'Hidden Figures', a film about the role of Black women in the space industry in the 1950s/60s
- the coverage of Charlottesville in terms of bias, and connected this to discussions on the American Civil War.

(NB: Members felt that English offers tremendous scope for anti-racist education, as with other social issues, as teachers can choose to use literature which deals with themes related to racism, and discursive writing can be focused on racism and related issues, but this is at the discretion of individual teachers and their professional judgement as to the appropriate curriculum content.)

- In **Religious and Moral Education**, pupils have looked at:
 - anti-Semitism, linking to WW2 in social subjects
 - attitudes towards racism globally and locally, through discussion and drama activities
 - anti-racist role models such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela
 - issues arising from the Holocaust
 - interfaith week and the value of respect for difference.
- In **Social Subjects**:
 - e.g. Modern Studies, Nelson Mandela is studied
 - through interdisciplinary learning, pupils learn about attitudes towards racism globally and locally, through discussion and drama activities
 - pupils have engaged in a unit (for S1, S2 and S3 year groups) on the UN Sustainable Development Goals¹⁰, which explores anti-racism.
- In **Health and Wellbeing** work:
 - some classes discuss the need to respect others
 - an S3 class explores what they may, or may not, consider as racist
 - pupils in an autism base have explored anti-racism within a Human Rights unit.
- In **Modern Languages**:
 - the content is inherently anti-racist as the promotion and acceptance of the culture and values of other countries are part of the Experiences and Outcomes; textbook material invariably represents the cross section of communities that live in that country
 - learners explore and celebrate differences between cultures.

Other approaches

- Some schools hold **special events**:
 - A school celebrates Chinese New Year, with inputs on Chinese language and culture
 - One area holds an annual EIS anti-racist poster competition for schools
 - One area organised a Convention on the Rights of the Child poster competition where pupils explored the concept of being 'free from discrimination'.

¹⁰ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

- Some schools work with **partners**:
 - o Some areas engage with 'Show Racism the Red Card', e.g. one school mentioned that they deliver workshops to all P7 pupils.
 - o One school has worked with 'Beyond the Veil' to challenge myths about people who are Muslim, especially women who wear Hijab.
- Members undertake **professional learning**:
 - o A specialist in one area is running a training session with probationer teachers, on anti-racism with a focus on Islamophobia.
- Teachers in another area are addressing racism through **Health and Wellbeing** planning.

EIS Learning Reps were also consulted about current practice. They reported on a wide range of anti-racist educational activity, including:

- Global citizenship education
- Coverage of the transatlantic slave trade in history
- Anti-racism being included as part of the wider Equality Diversity & Inclusion agenda
- Activity during Interfaith Month (November)
- Guest speakers
- Participation in the 'Rights Respecting Schools' programme
- Inclusion of racism issues in Personal and Social Education and in RME
- Use of relevant 'TED Talks'
- Police talks highlighting the consequences of racist behaviour and attitudes
- Show Racism the Red Card workshops
- A wide range of Holocaust education activity, including studying films ('The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas', 'Schindler's List') and visits to synagogues on Open Doors Day.

The above represents a snapshot of current practice and may give members some ideas for how to develop their anti-racist education work. Any curricular interventions, projects, events or initiatives should sit within a wider context and form part of the whole-establishment approach to preventing racist attitudes and celebrating diversity.

School/college ethos: Handling incidents

Anti-racist education should be part of a whole-establishment approach to promoting equality and inclusion. Alongside discussing race equality matters across the curriculum, establishments should also make concerted efforts to challenge racism on a range of other fronts. One aspect of this would be their handling of racist incidents.

In 2017 the EIS gathered information from across Scotland about local authorities' approaches to recording racist incidents. From the data received, we observed that practice as regards recording of racist incidents appears to be very variable across Scottish schools. Some authorities do not record race-based or racially motivated incidents at all. Several authorities had recorded extremely low numbers (often less than five incidents in a year), which does not align with what we know about hate crime, or data gathered by Show Racism the Red Card, who reported in May 2017 that 37% of young people in the classes they were working with had experienced racism. This suggests either under-reporting by pupils or under-recording by schools.

Likewise, there were a few authorities that had a marked decline in incidents, and nine authorities overall recorded a decreased number of incidents between 2015/16 and 2016/17. This seems counter-intuitive, in the current climate. It may be that some authorities are

seeing a decline due to enhanced efforts to tackle racist attitudes, but there has been no evidence forthcoming to suggest this.

The EIS would encourage authorities and establishments to develop robust systems for recording data on racist incidents, and critically to use the data to inform practice at a whole establishment level. Members must be supported with time and the necessary professional learning to use the systems that are put in place if they are to be effective.

New Scottish Government guidance on recording and monitoring of bullying incidents in schools¹¹ carries “an expectation that all local authorities and schools adopt the approach outlined within this guidance”, i.e. the approach of using the SEEMiS Bullying and Equalities module.

What can members do?

Taking account of working time agreements and the 35-hour CPD entitlement, members are encouraged to take whatever actions they can to enhance anti-racist education in their establishments, for example, by taking stock of current provision, developing policy or undertaking/providing professional learning.

Taking stock

- **Audit** your current approach to anti-racist education – be as honest as you can. Robust self-evaluation can help improve your practice. Consider using some of the challenge questions contained in ‘How Good is Our School 4’¹², especially relating to QI 3.1 (Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion) e.g.
 - “To what extent does our school celebrate diversity?”
 - “How well does our school ensure that the curriculum is designed to develop and promote equality and diversity, eliminate discrimination?”
- **Examine** whether anti-racist efforts are sufficiently cross-curricular or tend to be located in a limited selection of subjects or a single session with a partner agency.
- **Review** the content of the establishment library and other stocks of texts – are authors from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds well represented? Is the stock sufficiently ethnically and culturally diverse in its content?
- **Consult** with BME learners and staff or community members about the current approach – what is working well, and what could be better? Is anything actually undermining your message or intentions e.g. perpetuating stereotypes? (If there are very small numbers of BME staff and learners in the establishment you could consider asking a third sector organisation or an EIS Equality Rep or colleague from within your authority to act as a sounding board.)
- **Assess** the appearance of the school and the diversity of representations – do you have signs or posters in various languages? Do images used around the school and on the website/in the handbook or any similar publicity show diverse images of people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds?

¹¹Respect for All: Supplementary Guidance on Recording and Monitoring of Bullying Incidents in Schools, 2018.
<https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00535867.pdf>

¹² HGIOS 4 Self-Evaluation Framework:
https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK2_NIHeditHGIOS/FRWK2_HGIOS4.pdf

Developing policy

- **Consider** how to embed anti-racist approaches in the work of the establishment, taking account of working time agreements and school improvement plans.
- **Ensure** that the school has an updated anti-racism policy which reflects the rights of both learners and staff to work and learn in an environment free from discrimination. You could use EIS anti-racism policies as a reference point.¹³
- **Ensure** that policies and systems relating to the recording of racist incidents are robust and that staff are aware of them and understand how to use them, and have access to the relevant guidance; and monitor the data collected to identify issues which need to be addressed at a whole establishment level through curriculum and/or ethos.

Changing practice

- **Use** existing resources, such as:
 - EIS 'Myths of Immigration' booklets¹⁴
 - Show Racism the Red Card packs, films and other resources¹⁵
 - 'It Wisnae Us' by Stephen Mullen (Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights book about Glasgow's role in the slave trade)¹⁶
 - Video footage of the 'Glasgow Girls' talking about their role in campaigning for refugee and asylum seeker rights.¹⁷
- **Try** new approaches, using ideas from the 'current practice' section above.
- **Find out more** about the diverse range of religious festivals which might be important to BME members of the establishment's community and explore ways of marking these.
- **Plan** for some activity during (but not limited to) Black History Month, which is in October. This could be an opportunity to highlight the contributions of notable BME people, or unsung heroes such as suffragette Sophia Duleep Singh or civil rights campaigner Ida B Wells.
- **Consider** linking anti-racist education to specific occasions e.g. Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January); International Day for the Elimination of Racism (21 March); World Refugee Day (20 June); Anti-Bullying Week (November); or UN Human Rights Day (10 December).
- **Invite** diverse members of the school or wider community to become involved in sharing their experiences and exploring their culture with staff and pupils.

Learning more

- **Seek out and take** opportunities to personally engage in professional learning on race equality matters, and to be involved in collegiate discussions about the professional learning offer to your colleagues across the establishment.

¹³ EIS Anti-Racist Policy: <http://www.eis.org.uk/PoliciesandGuidance/Anti-Racist>

¹⁴ Myths of Immigration booklets: <https://www.eis.org.uk/Policy-And-Publications/MythsofImmigration>

¹⁵ Show Racism the Red Card Scotland: <http://www.theredcard.org/scotland>

¹⁶ CRER Publications: <https://www.crer.scot/crer-publications>

¹⁷ Glasgow Girls film: <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/inc75-glasgowgirls>

Questions?

For more information, please see: <http://www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Anti-Racism> or, contact Selma Augestad, National Officer (Education and Equality), email: SAugestad@eis.org.uk

Further examples of current practice are warmly welcomed. If your establishment engages with anti-racist education in ways not mentioned in this paper, please share these with the Education and Equality Department (send relevant information to SAugestad@eis.or.uk).

Useful contacts/links

EIS Anti-Racist Policy

<http://www.eis.org.uk/PoliciesandGuidance/Anti-Racist>

EIS Myths of Immigration booklets

<https://www.eis.org.uk/Policy-And-Publications/MythsofImmigration>

Show Racism the Red Card

<http://www.theredcard.org/scotland>

Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights

<https://www.crer.scot/>

BEMIS

<http://bemis.org.uk/>

Scottish Association for Minority Ethnic Educators

<https://www.samee.org.uk/>

Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre

<https://www.mwrc.org.uk/resources/>

One Scotland

<http://onescotland.org/equality-themes/http-onescotland-org-equality-themes-http-onescotland-org-equality-themes-race/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/race-discrimination>

Scottish Government

<https://beta.gov.scot/policies/race-equality/>

Action on Prejudice

<https://actiononprejudice.info/>

Centre for Education for Racial Equality in Scotland

<http://www.ceres.ed.ac.uk/>