

# Racial equity update: survey responses

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- 32 schools have completed the survey – thank you very much!
- Following the renewed focus on racism around the world as a result of George Floyd's killing and the Black Lives Matter protests, **to what extent have teaching staff at your school been engaging in learning, personal reflection and discussion about racism?**

<input type="radio"/> Not at all yet	6
<input type="radio"/> Not involving all teaching staff but some interested staff have been doing this work	9
<input type="radio"/> We have started some work on this involving all teaching staff	11
<input type="radio"/> We have done quite a lot of work on this involving all teaching staff	4
<input type="radio"/> Other	



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## Some comments relating to staff learning:

- We have agreed that as a school, the first step will be for us to improve the 'racial literacy' of our staff through training and ensure that they are well read and well informed so that they feel able to contribute to our racial equity work. Our racial equity governor and I have begun by looking at the RISC racial literacy materials and also other sources in preparation for introducing this work as a whole school initiative
- We share weekly questions to start conversations around race and anti-racism with all staff. We have had INSET training with all teaching staff in regards to racial inclusion. This has become a weekly agenda item for all staff meetings and the Governors equality and diversity working group.
- We have been having discussions in staff meetings and have suggested books for the staff to read.
- Personal reading and then recommendations to whole staff.

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## Some comments relating to staff learning:

- The staff have been engaged in some initial discussions and currently their views are being gathered. A member of the SLT is focusing on unconscious racial bias and the impact that this can have on curriculum design for her MEd change project and dissertation so she is gathering baseline research data and reading around the subject.
- I think as a school serving a diverse community we are some way towards achieving 'hearts and minds' and certainly have a diverse staff, governing body and PTA in place for example. Our appointment of a Parent Support Advisor from a BAME group has been a positive step in supporting understandings. We also specifically recruited to our FGB from BAME groups to better reflect our community - this has also been a positive.
- We have had two training sessions on equality, including unconscious bias.

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- To what extent do you feel confident to lead staff in learning, personal reflection and discussion about racism?

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- Very confident 6
- Reasonably confident 14
- Not very confident 8
- Not at all confident 4



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## **Some comments relating to leaders' confidence:**

- My confidence would improve if I had a better knowledge base.
- Leaders of schools need more time to reflect on the complicated issues involved in racism - we need a better understanding and need to be empathetic towards others, especially the black community.
- We are conscious we want to get it right so are ensuring we show empathy and respect in our approach.
- There is trust and respect amongst staff so I am confident that discussions will be open, honest and will support us in moving forwards.

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- Other than staff learning about racism, has other racial equity work been taking place at your school in recent months?

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We have engaged in work relation to:

○ Reviewing and developing the curriculum	24
○ Reviewing and developing resources and displays	17
○ Developing understanding of the ethnic and cultural communities that the school serves	15
○ Reviewing policies and practices in terms of impact on racial equity, including unintended impact (e.g. Policies such as those relating to behaviour, uniform, racist incidents. Practices such as charity initiatives, diversity events, assemblies, speakers, trips and visits)	14
○ Developing our teaching about racism	13
○ Considering our school vision/ ethos in relation to racial equity	13
○ The way we relate to BAME pupils, such as: considering our approach to pronouncing children's names; working to know and understand our BAME children really well	9
○ Recruitment	8
○ Gathering views from pupils, parents and staff, including those from BAME communities, about inclusivity and anti-racism at our school	4

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**Some comments about other work in school:**

## **Initial steps**

- Classes have discussed racism as a consequence of the BLM protests.
- ~~W~~We have begun to plan opportunities to teach racial equity but very early days.
- We do not necessarily feel confident at this stage of the process but we are very clear as to what our aims are:
  1. Improve diversity and representation - Whose stories do we tell and who tells them? Making sure BAME pupils see themselves reflected in our curriculum, all year round.
  2. Re-examining how certain subjects are taught through a western or colonial lens, and re-framing this: Not necessarily changing what we teach, but how we teach it.
  3. Teaching explicitly about racism and anti-racism (present and past) within our curriculum and in a British context, all year round.

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**Some comments about other work in school:**

## **Parents and governors**

- Parents have been engaged by including items linked to BLM and anti-racism in the Headteacher's newsletter.
- We share news, books, questions with our community through our weekly newsletter.
- We shared the Yoopies #Stronger United "A parents guide to Black Lives Matter".
- The Trust has set up a working group for staff (and also one for parents).
- Racial Equity was discussed at our November FGB meeting and we have appointed a Racial Equity Governor to work with the headteacher on leading this work.

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**Some comments about other work in school:**

## **Resources and curriculum**

- We have invested considerably in a new collection of BAME books, some of which have been sponsored by parents. Our teaching staff evaluated the texts we use to ensure the children from all races represented in school could see themselves in the stories.
- Discussions around reviewing our books and curriculum, including an awareness of the resources used e.g. for assemblies, ensuring they are representative of all groups of people.
- We have started a review of our curriculum to look at the significant people we study to ensure we have diversity and equity and that those we study represent the nationalities and heritage of our school community, across all subjects.

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**Some comments about other work in school:**

## **Black History Month**

- The sharing of the book "Young, Gifted and black" in class assemblies during BHM and is now available in each classroom for children to read
- During BHM, children in Year 5 and 6 learned about the discrimination that black people faced as they arrived in Britain on the Empire Windrush in 1948.
- In assemblies during BHM, I focused on historical and contemporary black figures whose work/achievements have shaped UK history & culture. One assembly focused on the boycotting of the Bristol Bus Company in 1963 and how this was a watershed moment in the run up to the passing of the Race Relations Act in 1965. Details about each assembly were shared in our Newsletters to parents and included a little information about some of the less well known figures so that parents could learn about them too.

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**What form(s) of support from the LA would be most useful to you during spring/ summer 2021 in order to further this work in your school?**

- CPD supporting staff to develop their understanding of race and racism, to reflect on their unconscious racial bias, and to have conversations about race in the classroom 29
- CPD for headteachers and leaders to support them to be able to lead on this work 26
- CPD supporting staff to learn about the history that has led to today's multi-racial Britain, and the presence of people of colour in Britain throughout our history 21
- Network meetings to support the sharing of learning and practice 19
- CPD to support staff to review and develop the curriculum 18
- CPD to support staff to review policies and practices 18
- CPD to support staff to review resources 15

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**Are you happy for the suggested aims, principles and actions to be used as the foundation for this work in Wokingham schools?**

(The suggested aims, principles and actions can be found here: <https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/learning-and-teaching/racial-equity/> )



- Yes 30
- No 2

Several schools commented that the link didn't work for them – apologies for this. The two schools that selected 'No' commented that this was only because they weren't able to view the document.

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**Would you like to make any further comments about this work?**

- The main challenge is for all to see beyond the actual curriculum offer (which is of course important); not get caught up on superficial issues; but to be especially focused on how well all ethnic groups attain in schools. At the end of the day, educational attainment has a greater impact on life chances. If there are particular ethnic groups under attaining, then why? And most importantly, what are schools doing to address it? This can be the most challenging factor to overcome, because it can be due to underlying / subconscious biases of institutions and individual professionals. This is why addressing unconscious bias is so important.
- I think this is one of the most important reviews and pieces of work schools do in modern times.
- I think it is crucial as very young children are already aware of racial issues.
- I look forward to exploring and developing our own views as we work with Wokingham and other schools to help our pupils develop and challenge theirs.
- The challenge for our school will be the same as those we experience around disadvantage, in that equity must be woven through every aspect of the work of the school - curriculum, ethos, culture, values - and its significance on child development understood, appreciated and addressed by every member of the school community. This is something we have yet to achieve.
- I think it is a real positive step for society as a whole and to be able to support children to grow in their understanding of the wider world.
- Only concern is that as a school we have other key priorities for this academic year. However it would be useful to participate in training, in order to be prepared to develop this in 2021-22.

# Racial equity update: next steps

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Following sharing of the survey responses with headteachers and governors...

## **Short term – spring 1:**

- Survey will remain live at start of term for any other schools who would like to complete it
- Work with RISC to develop an action plan for the work
- Explore with RISC and other providers options for racial literacy training and make arrangements for this

## **Medium term – spring 2/ summer:**

- Racial literacy training, including exploring our own unconscious bias – for leaders and governors? (and LA officers)
- Network meeting/ Governor forum