

Summary of key points from The Racism Awareness Group meeting 24/11/2023

1. Michael updated on key actions taken by the school since our last meeting in July 2023 under the following headings:
 - a. Class assemblies – these are returning after Christmas and will share children’s learning
 - b. Displays – Black History Month learning is displayed around the school
 - c. Cultural Day – this will take place after Christmas
 - d. Headlines – as one of our main methods of communication, we send this out by text to all parents
 - e. Meeting invitations – all parents are invited to these meetings
 - f. Attendance at meetings – a member of the senior leadership team (SLT) will be at every meeting and all of SLT will attend where possible
 - g. New name – the group have come up with the new name, The Race Awareness Group
 - h. Training for SLT and all staff – our Deputy Headteacher, Michael, is continuing to attend training provided by Haringey and will train other staff at school
 - i. Parent support – Michael is happy to meet with any parent who would like support with how to speak to children about race
2. How to speak to children about race:
 - a. Michael presented key points to bear in mind based on academic research. These were:
 - Talk about race – don’t avoid the topic
 - Help build a positive awareness of diversity
 - Address what prejudice feels like and fight it
 - Provide facts and focus on topics like slavery (in an age-appropriate manner) rather than avoiding them
 - Expose children to books, film, languages etc which reflect diversity
3. The Haringey Pledge: parents were asked to consider the rewritten Pledge and give their views. Noted that the title had changed from ‘Raising BC and BAME achievement’ to ‘Racial Equity Pledge’.
4. Sophia (Governor) led 4 group discussions based on parent reflections on all of the above.

Discussion

Key thoughts / views on all of the above:

a. Updates from the school:

Parents were pleased to see how many of their previous suggestions had been followed up.

b. Re Talking to children about race:

Parents were pleased that the school was actively engaging in this area.

Felt some parents and teachers might need help and info to feel comfortable discussing the issues. Eg why were some skin tones darker than others? Needed to become part of normal conversation.

Might need to teach children to understand what racist behaviour looked and felt like.

Adults might need to be taught how to deal with a racist incident through eg role play.

NB. Michael explained how any incident would be followed up with both the children involved (and their parents) and would focus on both the behaviour and the

effects. This would be followed up by class discussion and individual support where necessary eg. Circle time activities, sharing books with children

c. The name of the group:

General view that the group wanted to raise greater awareness amongst the wider parent group of unconscious bias and its effects. Concluded that this would be helped by changing the name of the group to The Race Awareness Group since everybody belonged to a race.

d. Creating a sense of belonging: discussed the impact of apparently small changes eg adding plantain to school lunches.

e. Change to wording of Haringey Pledge: agreed with changing the title to Haringey Equity Pledge but uncomfortable about the addition of the clause, 'particularly our BC young people' (YP).

Felt this could be seen as disempowering, particularly when linked to 'disadvantage'. Also, that it 'didn't speak to me'. Wanted a phrase which would be 'progressive and empowering'.

Helen (Chair of Governors) agreed to feed back their view to HEP.

5. Next steps:

- a. Agreed to defer parent suggested topic – Colourism – to next agenda when there would be more time.
- b. Helen F, as Chair of Governors, will feedback parental views on Pledge to James Page.
- c. Next meetings: 9am Wed 13 March 24; 9am Wed 26 June 24.

Bryony Howe (Governor)

26/11/23