

Summary of key points from Race Awareness Group meeting 13/3/24

1. Michael (DHT) updated on key actions taken by the school since our last meeting in November 24 under the following headings:
 - a. Class assemblies: have provided examples of changes to the curriculum which reflect diversity, in accordance with RAG suggestions
 - b. Headlines – this is our main method of communication with regards to our meetings but text reminders are also sent
 - c. Support for parents wanting to discuss race and related issues with their children is available – please contact Michael with any queries
 - d. Concerns about some of the wording in The Haringey Pledge – this has been fed back to HEP and we are awaiting feedback
 - e. Examples of changes to the curriculum to reflect diversity – in art and English.

2. One of our parents, Judith, spoke on Colourism: discrimination based on shade of skin colour. She showed us film clips from CNN based on research with very young children to illustrate the point.

Very often these views and attitudes are unconscious and can therefore be very difficult to both spot and recognise within ourselves.

Two aims of recognising these biases:

- a) to change children's attitudes at an early age
- b) to ensure that children's life chances are not damaged by adults' unconscious attitudes and expectations.

3. Group discussion: how does colourism manifest itself in the school setting? How can we promote change?

Points arising from the discussion:

- Importance of role models e.g. in leadership/ positions of power and reflection of diversity in books. Still too difficult to find examples generally.
- Everybody needed to be aware of the power of words (to damage)
- The impact of the family on children's views. How could we promote change amongst parents?
- Lots of discussion around who children go to when something makes them feel 'uneasy'. Should be there 2 or 3 named adults? Should all school staff be able to deal with the issues? Is colourism/ discrimination highlighted as one of the areas children could talk to their 'Give me 5' adults about?
- Sometimes children can't express why they feel uncomfortable so difficult to 'tell' an adult. Adults need to be made more aware of their own unconscious bias. School staff (and parents) may need more focused support with this.

Suggestions: one or two assemblies focused on the above; more focused staff Inset to be investigated

4. Suggestions for Cultural Day: a celebration of diversity
 - After school event possibly taking place from 3.30 to 6.30
 - Include performances by adults and children
 - Displays by children – could include experiences of visits to different countries.
 - Families bring food to share
 - Dress up in traditional clothing

5. Next meeting: 9am Wednesday 26 June
6. Other discussions at the beginning centred on the disappointingly small turn out of parents at the meeting. A discussion was had about how to promote and encourage attendance. All parents and carers are very welcome!