



SHARPLES PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR ANTI-RACISM

Reviewed by	Governors
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Anti-Racism Policy

INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

Sharples Primary School will not tolerate any form of racism and is committed to the development of an anti-racist ethos. The school anti-racist policy and practice helps to identify and change those attitudes which lead to negative discrimination against people on the basis of their race, ethos, nationality or ethnic origin.

BACKGROUND

The term 'racism' refers to: 'conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin.' As an organization and individually we cannot support either explicitly or implicitly any such attitudes and undertake to actively discourage any such perceptions.

The official definition of a racist incident was proposed by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report in 1999.

It is important that all pupils, staff, parents, administrative staff and governors at our school know what the official definition of a racist incident is, and why it has to be used.

The official definition is this:

'any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.' A useful working definition in schools is 'behaviour or language that makes a pupil feel unwelcome or marginalized because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, religion or national origin.'

There are three important points to stress about this definition:

1. It is for the purposes of initial recording. Just because an incident is alleged or perceived to be racist does not mean that it necessarily is racist. But it does mean that it must be recorded and that an investigation must be carried out.
2. Whether or not the offender intended their behaviour to be racist is irrelevant. Of course, when it comes to dealing with an incident, the offender's intentions are an important consideration. But at the stage of initial recording and investigating, the offender's attitudes, motivation and awareness are not the main issue.
3. A racist insult may refer to issues of culture or religion as well as to colour and appearance. Anti-Muslim insults and name-calling, for example, should be seen as racist. So should name calling which targets the Gypsy/Traveller community

The differences between racist name calling and most other forms of bullying lie in the fact that racism has a long history affecting millions of people; that it is a common feature in wider society, with people being seriously harmed and injured by it and sometimes even viciously attacked and murdered; and that children do not alas, inevitably grow out of it. The law of the land recognizes the seriousness of racism by requiring that courts should impose higher sentences when an offence is aggravated by racist or religious hostility.

It is essential that teachers and administrative staff should be clear, both as individuals and as a whole staff, why racist incidents are considered by the criminal justice system to be more harmful than incidents that do not contain a racist component. This is not to say that racist behaviour in schools should necessarily attract greater sanctions than other kinds of bullying. It does, however mean that allegations of racist bullying should be taken extremely seriously.

The distinctive feature of a racist attack or insult is that a person is attacked not as an individual, as in most other offences, but as the representative of a family, community or group. This has three particularly harmful consequences:

1. Other members of the same group, family or community are made to feel threatened and intimidated as well. So it is not just the pupil who is attacked who feels unwelcome or marginalized. 'When they call me a Paki,' explains nine year old Sereena, 'it's not just me they're hurting. It's all my family and all other black people too.'
2. Since racist incidents affect a group as well as an individual, they are experienced as attacks on the value, loyalties and commitments central to a person's sense of identity and self-worth - their family honour, friends, culture, heritage, religion, community, and history.
3. Racist, cultural and religious abuse accordingly hurts in broader and more complex ways than most other kinds of abuse. Racist attacks are committed not only against a community but also in the eyes of offenders themselves, on behalf of a community- offenders see themselves as representative of, and supported in their racism by , their friends, family and peer group. Even more than in the case of most other bullying, it is therefore essential that a school should clearly show solidarity with and support for pupils who are attacked, and take care not to provide any kind of comfort to which the offenders see themselves belonging.

Ofsted is required to inspect and comment on the measures which schools adopt to prevent incidents of racism occurring, and which they adopt when, despite their best efforts, incidents occur.

All staff should then be aware that racism is manifested in different forms e.g.

- Verbal abuse – name calling, insults, taunts etc.
- Written abuse and vandalising of belongings.
- Attacks on personal property or offensive gestures.
- Constant unfounded complaints against another child.
- Refusal to work or play with particular children.
- Physical abuse or threats.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

The governing body has a legal obligation to ensure that the school fulfils its duties with reference to anti-racism policies and procedures. They support the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate racism from our school. The governing body monitors the incidents of racism that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of racism and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-racist strategies. The governing body will respond to requests from a parent to investigate incidents of racism.

Headteacher

The headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-racism policy. The headteacher and senior staff sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so aiming to make racism less likely to occur. The school keeps records of all racist incidents that happen and round school. This log is kept electronically on the Admin system.

Teaching and support staff

Staff have a shared view of what racism is and ensure that all children know that it is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. It is the responsibility of everyone in our school to make sure that children feel safe and can learn and play with confidence. Everyone implements the school anti-racism policy and the senior management team ensures that all staff know how to deal with incidents of racism. We build self confidence through our Curriculum, assemblies and PSHCE work because when children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour. We take all forms of racism seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. We positively promote and reward good behaviour.

We do all we can to support any child who is being racially bullied and will refer to other policies when dealing with children who have demonstrated racist behaviour, ie Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Inclusion Policy. Adults working in class support all children and establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By being proactive in praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of racism. If, as teachers, we become

aware of any racism taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This will need to be handled sensitively and may involve counselling and support for the victim of the racism, and appropriate sanctions and support for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.

All incidents of racism will be recorded by staff on an incident sheet, including details on

- a description of what happened
- the time, date and place of the incident
- names, ethnic backgrounds and year groups of pupils involved
- action taken in relation to the offender(s)
- whether parents were informed and if so in what way

This form must then be passed on to the headteacher.

Staff must be aware that there is no one clear way to implement anti-racist education in schools and that sensitivity and firmness must be the guiding principles in dealing with racist incidents.

Parents

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being subjected to racism, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of racism, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. We encourage parents to support the school's anti-racist policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

CONCLUSION

The importance of working as a whole school to ensure that all children are given the opportunities to work and play free from racism cannot be stressed strongly enough. It is through taking a proactive approach to implementing all the policies that children's education will be fair, safe, secure and will encourage them to be good citizens themselves.