

Footprints

Step by step together

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Norwich

Your newsletter from the Diocesan Board of Education

February 2023



Paul Dunning
Diocesan Director of Education

In May 2020 George Floyd was murdered in Minneapolis, USA. There was a huge reaction across the world, and I was challenged personally and professionally as to what my response might be.

To cut a long story short the Diocese formed a Racial Justice Network in March

2021 open to all our schools. In summer term 2022 Sarah Clafin was seconded one day a week to drive this work. She and a group of schools working with her have made a significant impact producing resources that will soon be shared across the Diocese. Sarah tells her story below.



Sarah Clafin
Deputy Headteacher
St Michael's Junior, Bowthorpe

Colossians 3:11 – Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

The UK has become more ethnically and culturally diverse since the middle of the last century, but Norwich and Norfolk are still seen as predominantly white. However, there is greater diversity than many realise. At St Michael's V.A. Junior, there are over 25 languages spoken and we have children from 44 different countries.

In the winter of 2019, we noticed a lot of our children were rejecting their

cultural background and some were joining anti-social groups. Following the murder of George Floyd, we decided we wanted to respond and promote racial justice and put it at the centre of school improvement. We felt passionately that this had to be a shared responsibility; all staff had to be involved. Not only this, but we also wanted staff to be proactively noticing diversity, equality and inclusion issues and be able to take action.

Working closely with Corri Laniado (Co-Race and Equality Consciousness Lead) we took every opportunity to engage staff in conversations and spent time listening to viewpoints and perspectives. From this, we carefully crafted bespoke training that countered unconscious views and worries, using the training to develop our staff's racial literacy. Challenging conversations on race are now embraced as part of our school culture. Rather than being led or directed, they now occur naturally with children and staff at different levels of responsibility. Investing time in the early stages is essential. Strong foundations in knowledge builds confidence. Confidence is empowering.

Listening to our children's voices and enabling them to lead and make meaningful contributions has been very important. Our Culture Society is made up of thirty children with representatives from each year group, reflecting the diversity

of the school. The children have a key role in planning cultural celebrations, games, quizzes, displays and other activities that the whole school community can learn from and be involved in. They feel strongly about encouraging their peers to share their backgrounds and beliefs.

From the outset we felt it was very important to consult with and include our parents, who were, especially at the beginning, hard to reach. We were not even deterred by the restrictions imposed by the pandemic and created a series of racial justice assemblies, offered online. We noticed that more parents from ethnic minorities were coming to these assemblies than previously.

In 2021 we felt privileged to be awarded Silver in the Race Charter Mark in recognition of our work during this two-year period. One notable consequence is that the number of racist incidents at the school has plummeted.

It has been wonderful working with colleagues in the Racial Justice Network and we look forward to sharing the work we've begun more widely. We have developed a MS Teams site as the go to point and I'm happy to help schools with curriculum audits, action planning, and training around racial literacy and political impartiality. The network is open to all so pleased get involved and make contact sarah.clafin@dioceseofnorwich.org

Gemma Pryke

History Leader
Blundeston VC Primary School

Back in June 2022, we were delighted to join the Diocese racial justice working group, led by Sarah Clafin, and saw this as an invaluable opportunity to work alongside other Diocese schools on a collaborative resource for Black History Month.

During the initial meeting, it was inspiring to hear of the varied and interesting ways that schools across the Diocese were supporting pupils with their understanding of key momentous events and inspirational people who helped to shape British black history.

Blundeston was one of a group of schools who worked together on this project. The intended outcome was to produce planning documents which schools could use throughout Black History Month to teach pupils about the key events of the British civil rights movement, as well as enabling them to learn about the

achievements of British black icons.

We were so pleased to receive the completed planning documents from Sarah in September and we could see instantly how they were going to really enhance our curriculum, support staff, and enable our pupils to develop an even richer and deeper understanding of British black history.

Multiple opportunities were planned in throughout the month to ensure full coverage of the content suggested in the documents. Highlights included whole-school collective worship on 'Celebrating Africa' and 'Our British Black History' as well as in-depth class studies of British black icons. Examples included the work our Year 1 pupils completed on Anna Mudeka, a local musical icon, as well as the excellent projects completed by our Year 5 pupils on the Windrush generation. Our Key Stage 2 pupils also enjoyed joining in with the virtual Diocese quiz!

This was such a valuable project to be part of and we look forward to collaborating with other Diocese schools as the work continues this year.



Sarah Barber – Curriculum Lead Henri Dodson – EAL and MFL Lead Cringelford VA Primary

John 10.10 – That you will have life in all its fullness.

Cringelford CE VA Primary School aims to celebrate its diverse community by providing an inclusive education of the highest quality through the Christian beliefs of compassion and courage.

At Cringelford CE VA Primary, we are lucky to have a diverse community which includes 30% EAL children. We want all our children and their families to feel welcome within our school and we have been working hard to develop this ethos.

Our curriculum reflects diversity through the people we learn about and the contexts we learn through. This includes the historical figures we explore, the musicians and artists we discover and the books and authors we enjoy.

Our Black History Month was a huge success, both for children and staff. This was thanks to our collaborative work with a group of schools within the diocese creating and developing quality resources. It was a fantastic opportunity to share knowledge about key events and icons of Black Britain. These resources have become integral to the children's

curriculum and will be built on each year.

We are proud to be part of the award-winning Young Interpreters Scheme (YIS) created by Hampshire EMTAS. The YIS facilitate the transition to school for children who are new to English. Their role is to act as mentors to novice EAL learners in everyday school activities. Each Key Stage 2 child completed a 4-part training programme where they were taught about their role and responsibilities to support the cultural and linguistic needs of the children new to our community.

Last summer we celebrated 'International Week' by hosting A Day of Welcome; a day of solidarity in schools across the region, that aims to build a culture of welcome and understanding for refugees and asylum seekers. Children designed a Welcome poster for their classroom demonstrating the languages

spoken in the class. That day, the curriculum included activities to engage with issues relating to refugee migration, and to understand what it means to be seeking sanctuary.

As we continue with this journey, we have further developments planned. In March we hope to submit our application to become a 'School of Sanctuary' a clear message that for those in need of sanctuary, our community is a welcoming place. We are also about to create a Culture society where children from all backgrounds will have the opportunity to plan events in school to share and celebrate their beliefs with others.

Ultimately, we want to ensure all our children feel equal and have the same opportunities so they can thrive and leave our school as compassionate and courageous individuals who understand their place in the world.





Jon Ford
Headteacher
Open Academy DNEAT

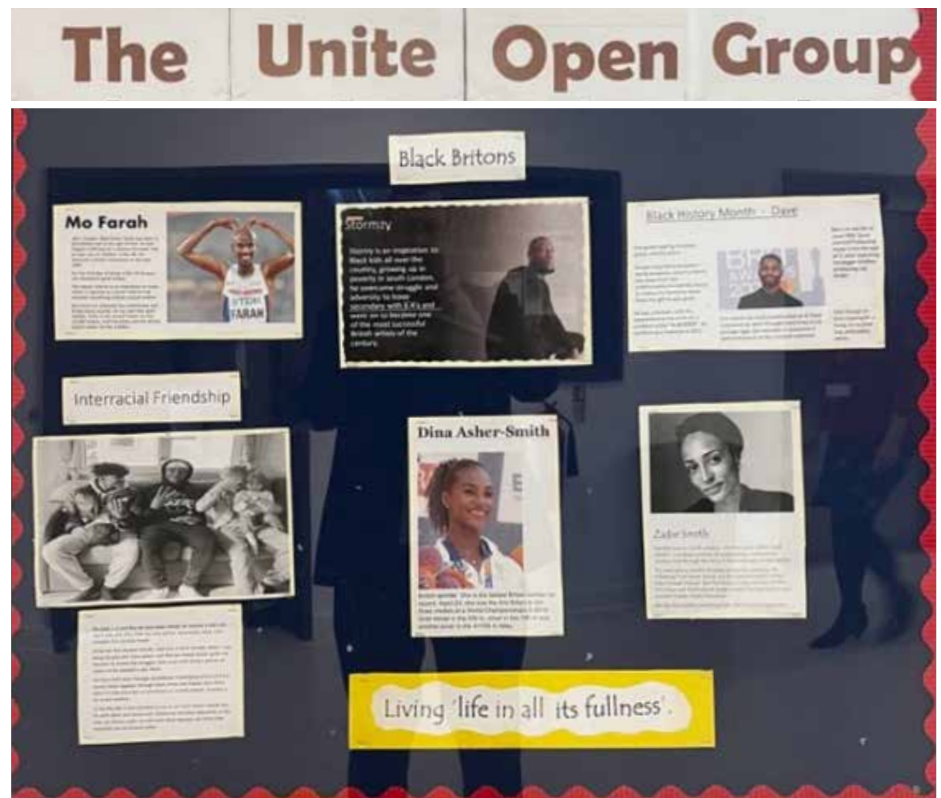
Unite Open – Global Majority Group

I was challenged a couple of years ago by a student who started their journey in our sixth form who asked us to make sure that her sister did not have to go through some of the racist abuse which she had suffered when she first joined the Academy.

I asked her how things were now, and she explained that over time things had got better. However, she didn't know whether that was because her peers had matured with her and she was concerned that change may not be embedded. This motivated me to ask the student council whether anyone might be interested in setting up a group to explore the experience of the global majority students at Open Academy.

A couple of students were indeed keen to start exploring the idea and I was fortunate that the trust had run some training with BAMED East, which meant we had a source of expert support to draw on together. A couple of members of staff Mrs Thopill and Miss Hughes, agreed to volunteer their time to help and support students to get a group together and to start exploring ways in which the Academy could begin to engage positively with racial elements of diversity. A core group of key student leaders stepped up and the Unite Open group was formed.

Over time the group developed The Unite Open Charter as a statement of inclusivity and have conducted several activities to help create a positive and supportive



atmosphere for students of all races in the Academy. One of those founder leaders was Josh and recently I spoke to him regarding his motivation for getting involved.

Josh echoed what the sixth former had said to me months before, namely that when he was younger in the Academy he had seen and experienced some racism and that he was determined that younger students should not have to face that. He told me that “my dad told me to be proud of my skin colour and I really am - and I want to help other students feel the same way.” He went on to say that the Unite Open group had a fairly slow start while both staff and students considered what they wanted to achieve and how they might go about it. Now they have got going, they have completed a number of activities to forward the aims of the group. One of the key activities has been assemblies to help other global majority students feel good about themselves. They also researched and produced our global majority role model board which is sited prominently for all to see.

The Academy has improved its systems for recording incidents of racial harassment or abuse and school management report our figures regularly to the Unite Open student leaders through the school council. Josh was keen to say that the group appreciated the help and support of Lorraine from BAMED East for sharing ideas and opportunities, although some of the

planned visits will end up being enjoyed by the younger students as his focus now shifts to GCSE. Josh finished by saying that “the younger that students start to develop their identity the better it is” and so he would encourage all schools including primary schools to give it a go and set up a group; it is never too early to start developing a positive image of ones own race and culture.

Another founder member of the group was Leefner, who said that his motivation to join the group was just general interest. Although he didn't know what to expect, he said it has been good to get together with other students to talk about their experiences and how to make the Academy a better place for everybody.

The Unite Open group itself is therefore a clear statement of intent on the part of both the staff and students that Open Academy does not tolerate any form of racism or discrimination towards anybody. Indeed it encourages everyone to celebrate their heritage and culture. Both Josh and Leefner commented that they felt really well supported by their two teachers who helped organise the group.

We are now encouraging the younger students to push on with the curriculum work, alongside the groups role in supporting all students of global majority heritage. We would encourage any school thinking about giving this a go to get some support and go ahead!

Governor focus



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Racial Justice

John 13:34 – “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”

The Diocese has had a focus on racial awareness for two years driven by its Racial Justice network. Governors are very welcome to attend – next meeting 3.45-5pm online 25 May.

Racial Justice or racial equity is the “systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone” (nea.org). As governors you should be applying what the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) calls “due regard” to:

- Eliminating discrimination
- Providing equal opportunities to those with protected characteristics and those without

- Fostering good relations between those with protected characteristics and those without

Race is a protected characteristic so having due regard to the PSED includes considering race in the context of how you challenge the school by:

- Assessing the impact that the school and governing body’s decisions will have on those of all races in and around its community
- Considering the implications for racial justice when developing and approving policies and ensuring they are reviewed regularly with racial equity in mind
- Carrying out these analyses seriously, rigorously and with an open mind to integrate the principles of racial justice into the work of your governing body and into the ethos of the school.

All Headteacher’s reports should also include, alongside reports for bullying incidents, details of any racist incidents. Governors can support their schools to be racially just by asking what action is being taken not only about individual incidents, but overall to support pupils and staff to

be racially aware and just individuals. And remember if your Headteacher reports no racist incidents, this is equally an opportunity for challenge – can you be assured there were no incidents and if so, how is the school actively maintaining and promoting racial equity?

It’s not just about pupil experience either. Is the staff in the school, including the governing body, racially diverse and are opportunities explored to ensure that recruitment encourages racial equity? Are all staff and governors involved in recruitment and selection suitably trained regarding racial equity, equality and non-discrimination? Could you set an objective that they all will be within this year?

Racial justice or racial equity goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures. The role that governors play in consistently challenging school processes, systems and decisions is key to achieving racial justice across our schools and communities.

Welcome

Headteachers starting

Victoria McConnell
Flourish federation (permanent Executive Headteacher)

Farewell at Easter

Laura Green
Tacolneston and Morley federation

Gavin King
St Mary federation

Howard Nelson
DoNESC CEO

SIAMS congratulations

Congratulations to the following schools that have had their SIAMS inspections this term.

Good
Colkirk Primary Academy

REQM congratulations

Gold Award
Hopton Primary Academy