

WINGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Policy Statement for Race Equality

Date formulated: 2002

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Introduction and background

Wingrove is situated in the West end of Newcastle and serves a multi-cultural population from a variety of backgrounds. We celebrate the diversity of our intake.

Aims and values

As a staff we endeavour to maintain an awareness of, and to provide for, equal opportunities for all pupils. We aim to take into account cultural background, gender and any special need both in our teaching attitudes and in the published materials we use with our pupils.

We aim to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and to promote equal opportunities and good race relations in all areas of school life.

Monitoring and assessment of all pupils will ensure their progress over time and enable them to fulfil their true potential during their career at Wingrove.

Wingrove school maintains a Relationships and Behaviour Management policy which sets high expectations for all with regard to self, others and property. We emphasise and reward the positive, through teaching and personal example, encouraging our children to respect everyone and everything.

Our admission procedures intend to provide us with an holistic view of each child enabling us to value each individual, initiating links with families and the communities to which they belong.

In recruiting staff and in promoting their continued professional development, we aim to ensure that we meet the needs of everyone associated with us taking account of ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender, age, ability and social circumstances.

Leadership and management

Everyone associated with Wingrove School is responsible for the effective promotion of the policy.

We are committed to:

- Actively tackling racial discrimination, and promoting equal opportunities and good race relations;
- Encouraging, supporting and helping all pupils and staff to reach their potential;
- Working with parents and carers, and with the wider community, to tackle racial discrimination and to follow and promote good practice.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with the amended Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000);
- Ensuring that the race equality policy and its procedures are followed.

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the race equality policy is readily available and that the governors, staff, pupils, parents and carers know about it, and that its procedures are followed;

- Producing regular information for staff and governors about the policy and how it is working, and providing training where necessary;
- Ensuring that all staff know their responsibilities within the policy and that they receive appropriate training and support in carrying them out;
- Dealing with and taking appropriate action in cases of racial harassment and racial discrimination.

All staff are responsible for

- Dealing with racist incidents, and being able to tackle racial bias and stereotyping;
- Promoting equal opportunities and good race relations, avoiding discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins;
- Keeping up to date with the law on discrimination and taking up training opportunities

A member of the SLT, our Inclusion manager, is responsible for co-ordinating the work on race equality.

All professional visitors, contractors and employees of other agencies working in Wingrove are obliged to comply with the spirit of our race equality policy.

Policy into practice

All policies developed for use in our school adhere to our stated aims and values for the promotion of racial equality.

Outcomes of monitoring and assessment are used to inform target setting, planning and decision-making.

The effectiveness of the policy is assessed and reviewed annually.

Any data published will be based on statistics and will not use individual names or other means of identification. For this reason, and more importantly due to the way in which we work with our pupils, we prefer not to use the local authority racial incident reporting system. The system is not one which encourages pupils to learn and move forwards from past mistakes. We prefer to use any reported instances as a teaching opportunity and deal with them appropriately within school.

Training for staff and governors will be undertaken with the support of the Local Authority and evaluated using their recognised systems.

The policy is promoted in the school prospectus. All members of staff and the governing body will receive a copy and one lodged with the LA. A copy is available in the school office for any parent or visitor to view. Translation can be arranged by request. Breaches of the policy will be subject to the standard disciplinary procedures.

Dealing with Racist Incidents in School – Guidance

Definition of a Racist Incident

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report defined a racist incident for the purposes of reporting and recording as:

“Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”

The use of this definition ensures that all possible racist incidents are properly investigated and followed through. It does not mean that the incident is recognised as racist because someone says it is, only that it is investigated objectively as if it were.

Research shows that even very young children are aware of physical differences related to ethnicity and they attach values to these differences in line with the judgements prevalent in the home, family, community and society. Children may use derogatory racist terms and behave in ways which are racist, i.e. refusing to sit next to or refusing to play with other children because of their ethnicity. Although such incidents may not be motivated by clear-cut racist intent, the intention is often less significant than the effect on the person on the receiving end. It is important not to downplay the feelings of the victims.

Schools must make it clear that all forms of racism are unacceptable. Racist name-calling and the use of racist labels should be recorded and followed through.

Staff should not wait for victims to take the initiative. Young people often suffer this kind of abuse in silence, not even daring to tell their own families what they are going through.

In dealing with reported incidents, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report offers a useful working definition in stating that racism is:

“conduct or words or practices which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form it is as damaging as in its overt form”.

School Responsibilities

Schools should have structures and procedures in place to allow everyone - teaching staff, support staff, other adults in school and pupils, to be able to play a role in tackling racist incidents.

Everyone needs to know and be reminded regularly:

- Where the school stands
- What constitutes a racist incident
- What the procedures are
- Who they report racist incidents to

Above all it should be clear to people how they report incidents (confidentially and anonymously, if needs be). Members of staff with a role in handing reports of racist incidents, such as tutors/class teachers and senior management should be identified and known to all.

It is useful to have a member of senior management with designated responsibilities for racist incidents. This person should be informed of all incidents, be responsible for their investigation and for the completion of the paperwork, and play the lead role in following through, linking with the schools' disciplinary and pastoral structures. However, all staff should see dealing with racist incidents as an important part of their professional duties.

Guidance on Dealing with Racist Incidents

In order to deal with racist incidents effectively it is important to ensure that certain steps are taken; the relative importance of these will depend on the context and issues involved.

If anyone feels an incident is racist, then:

1. Initial Response

- Treat the issue seriously
- Respond immediately
- Reinforce the school's position and rules on racism
- Focus on the perpetrator's behaviour (rather than on the person)
- Support the victim, explaining how racism works through stereotyping
- Notify the named management team member responsible for dealing with racist incidents

2. Investigate

- Listen to all parties
- Address underlying issues, e.g. an incident may not be racial in origin – it may be a dispute over something else in which racist abuse has been used: in which case the original issue should be sorted out as well as the use of unacceptable words that made it a racist incident
- Make sure all race issues are covered. Do not just treat incidents as, for example, a case of simple bullying – be able to explain why it is a racial incident if you perceive it to be such
- If it is not judged to be a racist incident this would need to be explained to the parties involved, though the incident might still remain as another kind of infringement of the schools' behaviour policy which needed a response

3. Record

- Fill in racist incident report form and **submit copy of "Part Two" to LA**

4. Follow Through

- Address the perpetrator's racist behaviour and correct racist misperceptions, e.g. about not belonging in "our" country
- Reinforce the school's position and rules on racism
- Contact parents/carers of both the victim and the perpetrator – a procedure for reporting should be in place. This could involve a letter appropriate to the situation with a phone call inviting them in to school (if felt to be appropriate)

N.B. Victims have the right to refer cases to the police if their parents so wish and all parties have a right to appeal to the Governing Body.

5. Review

- Present regular monitoring returns to staff to ensure regular discussion and development of good practice
- Review procedures annually
- Use existing means of involving pupils such as student council
- Work with other agencies to promote good race relations
- Governing Bodies should be informed termly of racist incidents and actions taken to deal with them as part of the head teacher's termly report
- A governor could be nominated to have oversight of this area

All of the above should be dealt with in accordance with Data Protection and confidentiality maintained at all times.

Involving Parents

All parents need to be given the chance to be involved in developing the school's policy on racist incidents. All parents will need to:

- Know the school's position on racism and racist incidents
- Know the educational rationale for the school's stance
- Understand what the school's procedures in this area are
- Know how these might affect them
- Know what to do if their child has been subject to racial harassment
- Be sensitive to changes in the behaviour of their child that might indicate that he/she is being subject to racial harassment
- Know what will happen if their child has been involved as a perpetrator
- Know how the school is working proactively through the curriculum and school ethos to tackle racism
- Have an opportunity to see this and get involved themselves

