

Oaklands Community Primary School Racial Harassment Policy

Oaklands Community Primary school welcomes its duties under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. We are committed to a whole-school approach that will:

1. eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
2. promote equality of opportunity; and
3. promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

We have integrated our race equality policy within a single equality scheme which ensures that similar approaches are adopted for all areas of equality work, including race, disability and gender equality. Our approach to involving people from different ethnic groups and our priority actions to address race equality issues are included in our single equality plan.

However, we believe that our approach to addressing racial harassment and racial incidents is of such importance that it should be set out separately. This also links with our overall approach to safeguarding.

Responding to racial incidents – general principles

We recognise that racial incidents are very varied, but must all be taken seriously in order to:

- reassure the targets/victims of racism;
- ensure that incidents do not recur;
- ensure that all members of our school community understand that racial incidents are not acceptable; and,
- ensure that the school community as a whole remains safe.

Sometimes no overt racist language may have been used and it may not be immediately apparent that an incident is racial. However in law, for the purposes of reporting and recording, **“a racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person”**. This definition was used to ensure that incidents are always properly investigated and never treated lightly because the individual person to whom an incident is first reported is not convinced that a particular incident was racist.

We therefore ensure that all racial incidents are recorded, investigated and reported to the Local Authority, and that appropriate and proportionate actions are taken. The Local Authority’s racial incident reporting form is used to report all incidents, and contains a list of the many different types of racial incidents, including name calling, racist statements, racist jokes, assault, graffiti, social exclusion and spreading malicious rumours, any of which might be verbal or through text messaging or other technology.

Our approach to racist bullying sits within our approach to all bullying, which we always address robustly. We also recognise that there are features of racist bullying that can make it particularly hurtful.

- Racism has a long history affecting millions of people and is a common feature in wider society. People are seriously harmed and injured by it.
- Most bullying involves a series of incidents over time. In the case of racist bullying, however, a single one-off incident may have precisely the same impact as a series of incidents over time. This is because it may be experienced by the person at the receiving end as part of a general pattern of racist hostility. It can in consequence be every bit as intimidating, rejecting and hurtful as a series of events over time.
- Racist words and behaviour are experienced as attacks on the values, loyalties and commitments central to a person’s sense of identity and self-worth.

- A distinctive feature of racist bullying or insults is that a person is targeted not as an individual, as in most other types of bullying, but as the representative of a family, community or group. Other members of the same group, family or community can therefore be made to feel threatened and intimidated as well. People who experience racism may feel they have to stand up against it not just for their own sake but on behalf of their family and community and there is an increased danger of cycles of verbal abuse and possibly violence developing.
- The law of the land recognises the seriousness of racism by requiring that courts should impose higher sentences when an offence is aggravated by racist hostility. It is therefore important that children and young people showing racist attitudes are helped to understand the seriousness of racism so that they do not suffer the consequences of this in later life.

Responding to racial incidents – our approach

Our approach to responding to individual incidents and in particular the sanctions we take will vary depending on which of the following broad categories the incident falls into:

- 1) No offence was intended or taken;
- 2) Hurt or distress was caused, but the offending behaviour is unlikely to be repeated;
- 3) Hurt or distress was caused, and the children and young people (or adults) responsible, had previously been warned that their behaviour was unacceptable;
- 4) Substantial hurt or distress was caused; the behaviour was based on substantial hostility and prejudice; the behaviour may be repeated.

As stated above, we are never dismissive about incidents, for example ignoring or making light of them. Any actions will include complementary teaching and learning about why prejudice and racist bullying are wrong, or why comments/actions have caused hurt. We always ensure we take the time to help children and young people understand why racism is wrong and wherever appropriate we use restorative approaches, which include: supporting the victim(s) by attending to the needs of those on the receiving end of racism; preventing re-offending by enabling offenders to assume active responsibility for their actions and reintegrating them into the school community; avoiding escalation; and, repairing and recreating the community damaged by the bullying. We also ensure that we keep parents/carers informed about racial incidents that have affected their children and the outcomes of investigations into such incidents.

Staff responsibilities for responding to racial incidents

Promoting race equality and responding to racial incidents is the responsibility of the whole school community and we try to ensure that all members of the community are aware of their responsibilities.

The **governing board** is responsible for ensuring that the school complies with legislation, and that this policy and its related procedures and strategies are implemented. It monitors racial incidents on an annual basis and ensures that where appropriate this review informs future planning.

The **headteacher** is responsible for implementing the policy and for ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities (through the staff handbook and other information sharing) and are given appropriate training and support. The headteacher also has responsibility for investigating racial incidents, contacting the local authority for advice where necessary, taking appropriate action including keeping parents/carers informed of the outcomes of investigations and reporting incidents to the Local Authority (though this responsibility may sometimes be delegated to other senior managers).

All **teachers and other staff** are expected to respond appropriately to any racial incidents that may occur, indicating that such behaviour is not acceptable. They also ensure that

incidents are reported quickly to the headteacher and/or other senior staff. Staff know that whenever an incident is reported to them by someone else as racist they must report it to senior staff. Whenever they witness an incident (rather than it being reported to them by others) and they are uncertain as to whether or not it should be treated as racist, they report it to senior staff. Information for staff on their responsibilities is in our staff handbook.

All **pupils** are encouraged to treat each other, and other people they meet, with respect, and to report any incidents of a racial nature to an adult.

All **parents/carers** are made aware of this policy and encouraged to report any incidents of a racial nature to a staff member.

Our procedure for reporting a racial incident is as follows:

- Parents of both the victim and instigator should be informed of the incident and their child's role on the day concerned. Where possible this should be carried out by a senior member of staff, or inclusion worker with a clear indication of any racial words used in the incident.
- Alternatively a teacher may make the initial verbal report to the parents after coaching and support from a senior member of staff.
- A written response of the incident should be made to parents within 3 working days.

Recording of racial incidents is as follows:

- A Racial Incident Recording Form is completed and emailed to the LA
- A record of the incident is recorded in the pupil record in SIMS
- The incident is recorded on an annual master copy with the above letters included, this is viewed by Ofsted during an inspection.
- The school report any racial incidents statistics that have occurred annually to the board of governors

This policy will be reviewed in the spring term 2020 (or earlier if subject to legislative changes)

Approved

Date: 19.03.2020

Review Date: spring 2022

Signed: *knpari* (Headteacher)