

Equalities and tackling disproportionality

Nationally young people from black Caribbean and Black mixed ethnicities are permanently excluded at a higher rate than pupils from white ethnicities. This trend is mirrored in BANES. This document aims to provide schools and professionals with guidance to reduce the number of exclusions of young people from non-white ethnicities.

The exclusion data within BANES must be viewed within the context of our county and the local population. The raw number of exclusions for young people from non-white ethnicities is small, the rate of exclusion however is higher than the national average.

As permanent exclusion increases the risk of being involved with criminality in the community it may be helpful to read this guidance alongside the BANES tackling disproportionality report and the 2017 Lammy review. The 2019 Timpson report also offers a range of strategies to support young people from non-white ethnicities. The government also offer a range of resources aimed at ensuring outstanding equality, diversity and inclusion in all education settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/equality-and-diversity>.

Within BANES the first step towards tackling disproportionality is to ensure that young people from non-white ethnicities feel a sense of belonging within establishments they attend. Within BANES less than 2% of the population are from black or mixed black ethnicities and less than 1% from Asian ethnicities. When compared with other local authorities these figures are very low.

Schools with small populations of pupils from non-white ethnicities will need to think very carefully about how young people from non-white ethnicities gain a sense of belonging in the school and within the community. In many ways the challenges faced by schools within BANES are greater than in other local authorities with a wider range of ethnicities and larger populations of young people from black or Asian ethnicities. Schools should consider linking with schools in neighbouring authorities to foster relationships where sharing of successful practice can take place with regards to supporting young people from non-white ethnicities.

Schools may wish to investigate the Anti Racist school award <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/schools/school-of-education/anti-racist-award-a5-flyer-hires.pdf>. The award covers strategies ranging from school governance to pupil voice aiming to tackle racism in schools.

Jason Pegg and The Black Families Support Group <https://www.educationequals.org.uk/> offer outstanding advice and training to school staff and governors and advocacy, mentoring and supplementary school for young people and their parents or carers within BANES.

Bristol based organisation Representation Matters lead by Aisha Thomas are a great source of information and training <https://www.repmatters.co.uk/people>.

Strategies to reduce permanent exclusion disproportionality

- It is vital that, if suspension or permanent exclusion is to be used, the school investigate fully the context of the situation and rule out the possibility of any element of racism being a causal factor for behaviours exhibited. The BANES exclusion reflective practice checklist is a useful document to ensure exclusions are compliant.
- Schools should consider the equalities training on offer not only for teaching and support staff but also for the governing body. Several of the organisations listed in this document provide excellent training for school governors on tackling disproportionality.
- Schools may wish to appoint a governor with the specific responsibility of overseeing equality and representation.
- Schools should consider outlining within school teaching and learning policies how the curriculum meets the multi-cultural needs of all pupils. Schools should also pay particular attention to their behaviour, bullying and racism policies, ensuring that strategies to reduce disproportionality are included. Many schools are making appropriate changes to their school uniform policy to ensure they are as inclusive of all cultures as possible.
- Schools should consider developing learning opportunities for young people who perpetrate or are the victims of ethnicity related incidents. Some schools have offered young people after school courses in equality so they are better able to understand their behaviours and the impact of their behaviours on others.
- Schools should track exclusion data closely. All schools were provided with an overview of their exclusion data by BANES in the academic year 2021-2022. Schools should consider how their rate of exclusion data for young people from different ethnicities compares to national data. Schools may wish to use this data alongside academic attainment data and attendance data for young people from non-white ethnicities as a barometer for the success of the curriculum and policies in place.
- As educational establishments, schools should first consider their curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all learners from all ethnicities. Schools should consider how the sense of belonging can be developed through a multi-cultural approach to curriculum design. Locally the One Bristol Curriculum has taken steps to address this issue. The website offers schools a host of ideas to ensure that curriculum design meets the needs of all young people.
<https://onebristol.inventive.host/>
- It is strongly recommended that pupil voice is considered when contemplating curriculum design. Some schools have found that giving young people ownership of the design of the curriculum and positions of school wide delivery greatly increase the young person's sense of belonging.

- Schools should regularly review the resources and reading materials available to pupils to ensure that pupils have access to multi-cultural content, context and role models.
- Strategies to include parental voice in curriculum decision making have also proved successful in schools from nearby local authorities.
- Schools should take part in regular reviews of the PSHE, RSE, SMSC, British Values curriculums to ensure they remain topical and meet the needs of young learners. The tutor curriculum provides a great opportunity for developing cultural capital and allows tutors to specifically targets the needs of young people in their group. Schools may wish to include items of government legislation in curriculum planning. Educating young people in The Equalities act 2010, the Childrens act 1989 and the European Convention on Human Rights have proven to be successful in several schools.
- Schools should consider how they teach young people positive equalities behaviours i.e. how can all pupils behave in a way that exhibits equality and diversity. Schools should aim for their staff and pupils examine their own beliefs and assumptions on race equality. Pupils and staff should be encouraged to consider how this affects their behaviours.
- Schools may wish to include on lesson planning or medium-term planning documentation how the curriculum is meeting the needs of learners from non-white ethnicities.
- Schools will need to educate all pupils on prejudice and racism ensuring that pupils can identify it and that barriers for reporting incidence of racism are removed. Schools choose to use a range of pathways for disclosure, some schools have highlighted online portals like “Whisper” as being particularly good for disclosure of sensitive subjects. These reports can be made anonymously if the pupil chooses so.
- As with all young people their sense of belonging is affected greatly by important transition periods. Schools should pay particular attention to supporting young people from non-white ethnicities, particularly between key stage 2 and key stage 3. The BANES educational psychology team are currently supporting the transition process for young people from black ethnicities by offering transition summer school sessions. Schools should contact jane_destecroix@bathnes.gov.uk for more information.
- Research in Bristol showed that in 2018 only 26 teachers out of nearly 1400 were from black ethnicities. It is important that young people have the opportunity to see role models from their own ethnicity working in schools within BANES. Schools should take appropriate steps to ensure this is possible. Schools with low numbers of staff from non-white ethnicities should consider regular visits from guest speakers or agencies from multi-cultural backgrounds.
- Schools should consider equality and diversity at the level of student leadership within the school. It is important that pupils from a wide range of ethnicities are included in the student leadership structure.
- Several schools in BANES have found that running regular equalities and friendship groups allows pupils from varying backgrounds to discuss issues

that are important to them and to build a sense of belonging within the school. Usually, a lead member of the equalities group also plays a part within the student leadership team. Schools may wish to administer yearly pupil voice reviews focused on the topic of belonging.

- Schools should consider keeping a calendar of cultural events that happen throughout the year and should celebrate these events school wide. School report giving young people leadership roles in the celebratory events has proven to be very effective. Some schools choose to link many aspects of school life to this cultural calendar for example extra-curricular activities and school lunches.
- Schools should look to give young people the opportunity to educate their peers on their culture. This could be done through the tutor curriculum or through school assemblies.
- School should look beyond the classroom to support young people from non-white ethnicities and their sense of belonging. Schools may wish to investigate the range of extra-curricular trips and visits on offer ensuring that a multi-cultural approach to the location chosen is taken.
- Schools should consider keeping track of attendance at extra-curricular clubs for pupils from non-white ethnicities.