

SOUTHWARK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION	
BRIEFING SHEET	
SUBJECT: Developing a race equality policy – Guidance for church schools	
RECIPIENT(S): Headteachers and Chairs of Governors of all C of E Schools.	
SDBE CONTACT: Carol Jerwood	DATE: APRIL 2002

NB: This document has also been sent to headteachers by email, if you have not received it and wish for an electronic version, please contact the SDBE.

1 Introduction

1.1 This briefing sheet is designed to help headteachers and governors implement the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, in producing a race equality policy. The deadline for the production of the policy is 31 May 2002. It is recognised that this date is now very close and schools are advised to put a policy statement in place together with a timetable for the review of all school policies in order to assess their impact on pupils, staff and parents from different racial groups. Guidance has been produced by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and is available on their website www.cre.gov.uk. Many schools will already have a racial equality policy (or similar) in place, but are advised to review this in the light of the CRE guidance.

1.2 In September 2000 the Board issued the second edition of its guidance on combating racism in church schools, *Colour and Spice*. To assist schools in accessing the Board's guidance, the model race equality statement contained in *Colour and Spice* is reproduced here, together with the action points from each of the chapters (see Annex).

1.3 LEAs will also have produced guidance for schools and will be offering training: this briefing sheet is offered as a supplement to LEA guidance to cover the Christian context in which Church of England schools operate.

2 The legal requirements

All schools must:

- (i) **prepare and maintain a written race equality policy**, which may be separate from, or part of, an equal opportunities or other policy. If the latter, it must be easily identifiable as a race equality policy. The policy must be agreed by the governing body;
- (ii) **maintain and implement a race equality policy** and ensure it is available and promoted among staff, pupils and parents; staff and governors will need regular information and training on the policy and its implementation;
- (iii) **review and assess the impact of the policy** as part of the school's development plan. The specific duty is to assess and monitor the impact of all school policies on pupils, parents and staff from different racial groups. The policy should state how this will be achieved.

3 The Policy

3.1 The race equality policy should contain the following elements:

- (i) **Context:** a summary of the main race equality issues for your school, eg, geographical location, ethnic composition of pupils and staff, bilingual pupils, pupil mobility, travellers, refugees, asylum seekers and any racially-motivated incidents both locally and in the school.
- (ii) **Aims and values:** this section should build on the Christian context in which the school operates, the following statement from *Colour and Spice* may be a starting point:

This school is a Church of England school that is institutionally rooted in the Christian faith. Through its corporate life it attempts to glorify God in the development of the full human potential in each person, whether governor, parent, pupil or member of staff. Its ethos of love and care and its commitment to justice are the foundation of its aims in educating the whole school community to make its proper contribution to society.

Therefore, this school:

- (a) *is opposed to all forms of racism which seek to disadvantage persons on the grounds of colour, culture or ethnic origin;*
 - (b) *will continue to re-appraise and develop its organisation and curriculum in order to create an ethos that meets the needs of all its pupils and so provide the best possible environment in which they may achieve their full potential, spiritually, morally, socially, intellectually, emotionally, and physically;*
 - (c) *will not tolerate racist behaviour such as name calling, stereotyping of all ethnic groups, insulting remarks, offensive graffiti, undue pressure on individuals and bullying. It will not use literature that is racially biased and dependent upon stereotypes, nor will it allow the distribution of racist literature or pamphlets or permit the wearing of racially offensive symbols;*
 - (d) *will take immediate and positive action against any racist offences whoever may be the perpetrator. Those responsible will be made aware of the school's opposition to racism and reasons will be given. Sanctions will be applied as judged appropriate according to the circumstances and having in mind a positive outcome;*
 - (e) *in the light of the above, is aware of the need to publicise its racial equality policy and code of conduct. It will keep them under review and maintain a system of monitoring their effectiveness. This critical openness should in fact arise from the place of the church school within the living Christian community which itself should be critically open in response to the message of the Gospel.*
- (iii) **Responsibilities:** This section will include details of who is responsible for implementing the policy.
- (a) The **governing body** will ensure that the school complies with the duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and that its policies and related strategies and procedures are implemented.
 - (b) The **headteacher** will be responsible for implementation of the policy and ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities and given training and support.
 - (c) A **named member of staff** will be given specific responsibility for co-ordinating racial equality across the school and for dealing with specific racist incidents.
 - (d) **All staff** will be responsible for dealing with racist incidents, challenging racial bias and stereotyping, promoting racial equality and keeping up-to-date with race relations legislation by attending training.
 - (e) **Visitors and contractors** will be made aware of their responsibility to comply with the school's policy.
- (iv) **Breaches of the policy:** The policy should include an outline of the action to be taken if pupils, staff, or others do not comply with the policy.
- (v) **Policy planning and review:** A brief description of how the school will monitor and assess the impact of the policy, to include:
- (a) how the school will assess the impact of the policy through consultation, evaluation, audit;
 - (b) how race equality questions will be built into school self-review and evaluation frameworks;
 - (c) how ethnic monitoring data will be used to monitor the attainment and progress of pupils by racial group and to set targets as part of relevant strategic plans;
 - (d) how information will be shared with the school community.
- (vi) **Implementation and promotion:** A brief description of how the policy will be implemented and made available, to include:
- (a) how often the policy will be reviewed, giving a date for the next review;
 - (b) how and where will the policy be made available and to whom?
 - (c) give a date when the policy was approved by the governing body.
- (vii) **Training and development:** Consider the training and support that may be needed by staff to enable them to implement the policy and the support for governors.

Action for Schools and Governors: Extracts from *Colour and Spice: Guidance on combating racism in schools*

Chapter 2 - RE and Worship

- (a) To give positive recognition to ethnic and faith backgrounds in all policy documentation.
- (b) To ensure that a multi-faith dimension exists in the religious education syllabus.
- (c) To review resources in order that authentic and accurate materials are used for the teaching of religious education.
- (d) To encourage the involvement of members of local religious communities in the planned religious education programme.
- (e) To ensure that all registered pupils are given opportunities, through religious education and collective worship, to develop spiritually and morally.

Chapter 3 - Raising achievement of minority ethnic pupils

The following questions will assist schools and governors in developing their planned action to raise the levels of achievement of minority ethnic pupils:

- (a) Does this syllabus represent a global view? Does it open up opportunities for the development of a global analysis of local and national events?
- (b) Does it relate to the pupils' experiences in any way?
- (c) Does it open up opportunities for pupils' critical engagement with the subject matter?
- (d) Will it help to stimulate pupils' critical powers further?
- (e) Does it provide the opportunity for pupils to extrapolate ways of challenging bias, racism, sexism, class domination and other forms of oppression?
- (f) Does it acknowledge positively the history of the struggle of black and other oppressed people against their oppression?
- (g) Does it contribute towards the overall aims of equality, justice and emancipation?
- (h) Does it give validity and legitimacy to the knowledge, experience and language of the pupils?
- (i) Does it acknowledge the contribution made by black people to the country's history, culture and development?
- (j) Does the school have a policy to ensure that teaching materials and resources promote the self-image of its pupils?
- (k) Has the school devised safeguards against stereotyping pupils, for example, in academic counselling and providing careers advice?
- (l) How does the school monitor at all Key Stages the achievement of minority ethnic pupils? How does the school use this information to improve the quality of learning and the achievement of minority ethnic pupils?
- (m) Where there are patterns of good practice and where pupils' achievements are high, in what ways does the school use this information to enhance other curriculum areas?

Chapter 4 - Admission to school

In applying Christian principles to its admission and appeal arrangements, governing bodies should consider the following questions:

- (a) Are the admission criteria seen to be scrupulously fair, strictly followed in the stated order of priority and are they an authentic expression of the Gospel?
- (b) Does the admission policy allow the pupil population of the school to reflect the ethnic balance of the local community, including those for whom English is an additional language?
- (c) Does the admission policy take into account children of other faiths and the enriching contribution they may bring to the life of the school?

- (d) Does the ethnic make-up of any committee established to deal with admission or admission appeals, mirror, as far as possible, that of the school population?
- (e) Does the admission policy of the school discriminate against individuals or any particular group (or groups) of people? eg, through giving priority to those whose parents attended the school, which could discriminate against travellers or refugee children.
- (f) Where church or other religious references are asked for, does the method used clearly allow for the full diversity of structures of different Christian and other faith groups?

Chapter 5 - Behaviour management and the exclusion of pupils

- (a) Schools should ensure that all pupils have opportunities to discuss, regularly, issues connected with racism. Systems must be in place to ensure that pupils are able to bring incidences of racial harassment to the attention of staff in confidence, and without fear of reprisal. Parents should also be made aware of the procedures for raising similar issues of concern in relation to their own child.
- (b) Schools must ensure that their behaviour management policies recognise the culturally-determined differences between pupils and must be aware of what is culturally acceptable.
- (c) Sanctions should be administered fairly and the implementation of the school's behaviour management policy should be monitored in order to ensure there is no racial bias.
- (d) Governors must monitor, regularly, the incidence of fixed term and permanent exclusion. They should identify, in particular, the ethnic origin of pupils to ensure that pupils from different ethnic groups are not disproportionately represented.
- (e) Policies should state clearly that racial harassment will not be tolerated in any form.

Chapter 6 - Appointment of staff

- (a) It is essential that all church schools adopt a comprehensive employment policy which promotes equal opportunities at all stages of appointment and promotion. The governors are ultimately responsible for any breach of the legislation.
- (b) A fair appointments policy must be more than a statement of intent. For it to operate, a policy must include detailed procedures and practices which promote racial equality so those from minority ethnic groups are not exposed to comments and behaviour which undermine their self-esteem and position.
- (c) When appointing staff, governors must always have a clear idea of the criteria relating to the post they intend to fill. These should take full account of the school's needs and its locality.
- (d) The religious stance of a candidate for a teaching post at a voluntary aided school can be very relevant and the governors' requirements in this respect should be clearly stated in the advertisement.
- (e) A badly designed person specification with ambiguous criteria could be discriminatory. The criteria must therefore be scrutinised to ensure that these do not put minority ethnic candidates at a disadvantage. The main aim of the selection process should be to focus on the extent to which any candidate matches the objective criteria.
- (f) A statement of the school's equal opportunities policy should be included in every advertisement. Governors should consider whether to advertise in media aimed at ethnic minority communities.
- (g) Questions must be avoided if they are likely to disadvantage any candidates on grounds of their colour, culture or ethnic background. No question should be asked which could give the impression to any candidate that they are being less favourably treated. The chair of the selection panel should monitor closely the questions being asked. It is possible that a panel member might ask a question which is potentially discriminatory. This can arise as a supplementary question to an agreed line of questioning. In this instance the chair should intervene immediately.
- (h) Equal opportunity employment policies and model appointment procedures will be effective only if they are supported by systematic training. This training should increase awareness of how racism undermines the position of staff from minority ethnic groups.

Chapter 7 – Performance management and appraisal

- (a) Everyone needs performance management and appraisal training so that all staff can participate critically in the appraisal process. Equality issues must be an integral part of the training and will need to address the dangers of bias and stereotyping on grounds of colour, culture and ethnic origin.
- (b) Self-evaluation skills need to be learned and encouraged. Minority ethnic teachers may feel vulnerable because of past perceived discrimination against them and self-stereotyping can lead to low

expectations. Staff need to be encouraged to be objective rather than subjective and may need input to identify their good practice.

- (c) There can be school-specific situations which are potentially stressful for some teachers. These should be kept in mind when the team leaders are selected and fear of racial harassment or discrimination should be regarded as legitimate reasons for requesting an alternative performance assessor.
- (d) Team leaders should act with sensitivity to all concerned and should not exhibit any bias in collecting information.
- (e) Equal opportunities should be addressed implicitly and explicitly in classroom observation.
- (f) All documents should be checked to ensure that language used throughout promotes self-esteem.
- (g) Team leaders should positively promote equality of opportunity by actively encouraging teachers from the minority ethnic communities who have management potential to develop their skills and seek management responsibility.
- (h) Monitoring and evaluation of the operation of the performance management policy should specifically address the extent to which equal opportunity principles have informed the process and there is a duty on governors to be vigilant of this. Governors should ensure the school's external assessor reports any evidence of advantage or disadvantage which must then be thoroughly challenged.
- (i) All teachers should be equally well informed of the performance management policy and procedure, including raising complaints through an agreed complaints procedure.

Chapter 8 - Grievance and discipline of staff

When governors are involved in conducting grievance and disciplinary procedures the following principles must be borne in mind and acted upon.

- (a) Governors must confront their own biases and prejudices. They must analyse conscious racist behaviour or language and what constitutes 'unintentional racism'.
- (b) Governors must act within their own declared policy on equal opportunities.
- (c) Governors must ensure that their procedures are well constructed, clear and not written with cultural bias that would disadvantage one particular group.
- (d) Governors must monitor their school's procedures and practices to identify the way racism operates within.
- (e) Governors must ensure that the membership of the panels established to hear grievance or disciplinary cases and any subsequent appeals, is selected in such a way as to maintain an appropriate ethnic balance.
- (f) Governors must take care to ensure that panels conduct their business in a manner which instils trust and avoids a stressful and confrontational atmosphere.
- (g) Governors should seek occasions for in-service training so that they may apply appropriate strategies to combat racism within their own practices and institutions.