

PE1840/A

Scottish Government submission of 3 December 2020

I very much appreciate the Committee's consideration of these important issues. I hope the Committee find the following information helpful and reassuring in relation to the points that they have been raised.

Anti-Racist Education

As set out in the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Standards for Professional Registration, teachers are expected at all stages of their careers to demonstrate professional values and personal commitment to social justice and cultural diversity by engaging learners in real world issues. *The National Framework for Inclusion* has been designed to ensure that all teachers are appropriately guided and supported throughout their careers towards gaining the required knowledge and understanding of inclusive education and the Equality and Diversity Professional Learning Modules provide comprehensive resources to support this -

<https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/equality-diversity-hub.aspx>.

The Educational Institute of Scotland, the largest teaching union in Scotland, provides a range of anti-racist education resources for their members in addition to tailored training - <https://www.eis.org.uk/Anti-Racism/NewAnti-RacistEducationResources>.

Within Curriculum for Excellence all staff are expected to be proactive in promoting positive relationships and behaviour in the classroom, playground and the wider school community, engage learners in real world issues and help them to embrace equality and social justice. This is effectively a condition of teachers' ongoing registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland.

As part of their Professional Learning offer, Education Scotland has been working with experts in race equality to update their educational leadership and professional learning programmes including their online learning resource with content and learning activities that help teachers, at all levels, develop an understanding on equality, anti-racist education and culturally-responsive pedagogy. This is being created with CRER and BEMIS for practitioners with relevant partners including SAMEE, the Anti-Racist Educator and Intercultural Youth Scotland. This will complement resources already collated including: equality advice for schools understanding racism; race equality organisations; curriculum ideas; support for different ethnic minority groups; intersectionality; and prejudice-based bullying and hate crime which can be accessed at

<https://wakelet.com/wake/EKpqdexEpY3JoNdrIjP36>

All Teacher Education Institutions deliver content specifically around racism. The Scottish Council of Deans of Education has identified 'Diversity' as the next thematic focus for its Self-Evaluation activity. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to examine progress in all aspects of diversity, while identifying tangible next steps to ensure Teacher Education Institutions deliver appropriate training on all issues of discrimination, including racism.

Racist Incidents in School

The Scottish Government takes all forms of bullying very seriously. Bullying of any kind, including bullying based on race or belief, is unacceptable and must be addressed quickly whenever it arises.

I thought it would be helpful to provide the Committee with an update on our wider work around anti-bullying. In November 2017, the Scottish Government published updated anti-bullying guidance [Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People](#) which provides the overarching framework for all adults working with children and young people to address all types of bullying including prejudice-based bullying.

Local authorities and schools should have clear, unambiguous anti-bullying policies that reflect *Respect for All* and create inclusive and safe environments for black and minority ethnic young people. These policies should directly reference the Equality Act 2010 and include a clear commitment to challenge all types of prejudice-based bullying and language.

In August 2019, a national approach to recording and monitoring incidents of bullying in Scottish schools was introduced, in consultation with the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights and a wide range of stakeholders with expertise in this area. You can find out more about this work [here](#). SEEMiS, the schools management information system, was updated to reflect the new approach and list of characteristics to include bullying based on race and racism including culture. The introduction of the [national approach](#) has introduced consistency across all schools as to how they should record and monitor incidents of bullying which will help identify key measures and actions that can be undertaken to address bullying. A formal evaluation will be carried out in 2021 to assess how successfully and effectively the new system for recording and monitoring bullying incidents in schools has been introduced.

respectme, Scotland's anti-bullying service, is fully funded by the Scottish Government to provide direct support to local authorities, youth groups and all those working with children and young people to build confidence and capacity to address all types of bullying effectively. respectme offer a programme of free training and webinars to adults across Scotland. The training provides delegates with an introduction to bullying behaviours and practical strategies which can be used to address bullying behaviour when it occurs, this includes bullying based on race or belief.

I would also like to highlight guidance the Scottish Government funded that was produced by respectme and the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights in 2019 on how to effectively address incidents of racist bullying in schools. The [guidance](#) sets out that not all incidents where racism occurs would be considered bullying and encourages the recording of a racist incident or racist bullying. The guidance also highlights the importance of developing a school environment where the values of inclusion and respect are uniformly applied to all students and their families.

As set out in responses to petitions PE1813 and 1814 on race equality in recent weeks, the Scottish Government and its planning and delivery partners are in the process of scoping activity and speaking with stakeholders to assess the extent to which further action is required to ensure that race equality and anti-racism is embedded across our schools and systems and that all young people experience an education that is free from discrimination.

I hope this provides reassurance that we are continuing to work to ensure issues around race equality and racism are being properly addressed within the education system and that active discussions and consideration are underway to seek ways to enhance progress wherever possible.

I would be happy to keep the Committee updated further on progress and developments on this important area of work over coming weeks and months if that would be useful.