UKCCIS

UK COUNCIL FOR CHILD INTERNET SAFETY

[Anti-Bullying Alliance]

Tackling race and faith targeted bullying face to face and online

A short guide for schools

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National Children's Bureau

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) and the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) represent a broad range of charities, organisations and individuals committed to keeping children safe from bullying and abuse – both face to face and online. UKCCIS and ABA are aware of concerns around rising levels of race and faith targeted abuse online, in our schools and in our communities.

An increase in hate crime and incidents in school[1] has been reported, as well as increased contact from children to Childline about race and faith targeted bullying[2] and over a fifth of teachers saying pupils are subjected to hate crime and speech at school[34].

No child should have to grow up experiencing bullying and harassment.

In response to this we have worked together to produce this brief guide for schools to help you to begin to formulate a whole-school strategy to preventing and responding to race and faith targeted bullying. The Anti-Bullying Alliance website has a hub of links to further resources and organisations that can help you on your journey.

Visit www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/raceandfaith to find other useful resources.

Schools in England have a legal duty to ensure the safety of all children and young people and to prevent all forms of bullying. Staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school. If you think a child is being harassed in school you must act to prevent it (for more information see the Anti-Bullying Alliance guide to Bullying and the Law).

What is race and faith targeted bullying?

Race and faith targeted bullying is bullying that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be racist or bullying that targets a person's faith[5].

The relationship between racist incidents and racist bullying

All incidents of racist bullying in schools constitute a racist incident. However not all racist incidents would constitute racist bullying. To determine if racist incident/s are bullying, it is important to have a shared whole-school understanding of what bullying is. The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

'the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online.'

What does the law say?

The Department for Education has released guidance for schools about preventing and tackling bullying. You can find it here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/623895/Preventing_and_tackling_bullying_advice.pdf

There are several pieces of legislation in England that are relevant to race and faith targeted bullying:

- Equality Act 2010

- Education and Inspections Act 2006

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[1] https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/exclusive-school-hate-crimes-spike-following-brexit-and-trump-votes
[2] https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/news-opinion/childline-rise-contacts-race-faith-bullying?utm_source=twitter_nspcc&utm_medium=nspccsocialmedia&utm_campaign=owntwitter_tweet
[3] https://www.atl.org.uk/latest/pupils-subjected-hate-crime-and-speech-while-school-atl-poll
[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625908/NFER_Teacher_Voice_report_November_2016.pdf
[5] Stephen Lawrence Inquiry in 1999 by MacPherson

- Children Act 2004

- Education Act 2002

- Human Rights Act 1998

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a public sector equality duty. All schools must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

This duty covers the 'protected characteristics' which includes race and religion or belief. Under the public sector equality duty, schools must act if they are aware of the use of racist language or language which targets pupils or school staff because of their faith. For example, in helping to foster good relations it is useful for schools to consider whether their policies and decisions help them to tackle prejudice, such as racist and faith-based bullying.

It is important we understand what the Equality Act means by race. You can find out more about this via the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance[6].

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, head teachers, with the advice and guidance of governors and the assistance of school staff, must identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect for others, and self-discipline among pupils, and to prevent all forms of bullying. This includes the prevention of bullying around race, religion and culture.

Top tips

These are some key actions you can take to both prevent, and respond to race and faith targeted bullying in your school.

- Be clear where you stand: Remind all members of the school community that you will challenge any offensive language or comments and that you take all forms of bullying and prejudice extremely seriously. Reinforce this principle through displays, newsletters, notice boards and published information to parents/carers and learners.

- Be clear that any reports of racist behaviour will be taken extremely seriously and this includes activity on social media platforms. Consider sending out an email/ letter to all students and parents reminding them of the school ethos and values, being clear that you will challenge all forms of bullying and abuse.

- Make sure your anti-bullying policy/behaviour policy/e-safety policy includes race and faith targeted bullying and that this is shared through your school website and made readily available to all members of the school community.

- Ensure preventing and responding to bullying (including race and faith targeted bullying) is included in all staff training.

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[6] https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/race-discrimination#h1

- Never dismiss reports of racism or bullying – be clear you take this seriously and acknowledge their feelings. Listen to them and involve them in your response.

- Encourage all staff and students to be vigilant to bullying, prejudice and abuse – whether face to face or online, and to report any concerns.

- Encourage children to speak to teachers/ support staff if they have any worries or concerns about bullying, prejudice or abuse.

- Record levels of race and faith targeted bullying: Be sure to keep a record of any incidents and take immediate action if you receive a report of bullying or abuse. Being able to provide clear evidence that schools have identified a problem, taken action to tackle it and continue to review it is useful for their Ofsted inspections.

- Consider whether to report racist incidents/faith targeted incidents as hate crimes to the police

- Children will parrot what they hear at home, in the streets and on social media. Be patient, be kind and always promote inclusion and respect diversity.

- Take a whole-school and cross curricular approach. Involve all aspects of the school community. Take time in assemblies, tutor time and through the curriculum to remind students that they are all equally respected and valued.

- Seek help. It is important that schools seek advice if they are unsure how to handle a situation. At the end of this document you will find a list of specialist agencies that can offer guidance and support.

Identifying further support and resources

The Anti-Bullying Alliance and the UKCCIS Education Working Group has collated links to organisations, tools and resources that may help you in your anti race and faith targeted bullying activity and responses. These are housed at www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/raceandfaith

Inclusion on this site does not necessarily imply endorsement by UKCCIS or the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

It goes without saying that issues relating to bullying, race and faith can be sensitive for staff and students. There are lots of ways of approaching the subject – and not everyone will agree on the best method. It may be that a resource works well with one group of pupils or in one setting, but works less well in another. For this reason we would urge you take the following steps when choosing a resource or activity:

- Make sure you familiarise yourself with the resource (e.g. if it's a film – watch it all the way through)

- Consider whether the resource may provoke strong reactions in any students or may lead to difficult discussions or conflict. How will you manage this? Could there be particular students or groups of students that might need additional support either prior to using the resource, during the session, or after the session?

- Consider whether you need to consult with a senior member of staff or with parents and carers.

- Consider whether the resource is suitable for the age group you are working with.

- Consider whether you need to adapt the resource to make it suitable for the group or individuals you are working with.

- Make sure you encourage students to talk to you or to one of the agencies listed in this document if they need support or advice following the session.

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UKCCIS and the Anti-Bullying Alliance, November 2017