

**Diocese of Carlisle Board of Education**

**Weekly Headteacher Correspondence**

**Tuesday 17th November: Let’s talk – prejudice, race and diversity in Cumbria**



***Carlisle joining National Black Lives Matter protests Anatomically correct dolls***

**Guest Speaker**

We were delighted to be joined by Blessing this week. We were grateful to her for bravely sharing with us some of the challenges and difficulties she faced being part of a very small minority of black pupils at a rural boarding school, notwithstanding having won a scholarship to attend.

She spoke of the lack of understanding from staff members who made her feel like she had to keep saying the same thing time and again, that she didn’t feel heard and that she was made to feel like her very real pain was an over-reaction, “not a big deal”. She told us that, eventually, the lack of empathy and understanding made her give up sharing problems with staff.

Blessing told us how the lack of consistency and parity between treatment of herself and other black students compared to their white counterparts led to resentment and segregation.

**Tackling prejudice and racism in Cumbria**

**Role models:** We discussed the fact that for many of our pupils, school is the only place where they have the potential to be exposed to **BME role models**. Do your pupils have an opportunity to see a non-white person as inspirational, a role model, someone to aspire to be like? A guest speaker? A sportsman or woman? A performer (singer, musician, dancer)? A teacher (whether employed, peripatetic or workshop leader)? Black children are exposed to white role models all day every day. Are your pupils, white or black, exposed to black role models?

**Someone to talk to:** being in a minority is lonely and it is very easy to feel isolated. Your BME pupils need someone who they can talk to who understands what it feels like to be experience negative conduct, words or practice purely because they belong to a minority group. If you do not have any BME staff, do you have staff members who you know are equipped and feel confident to talk about racism and being in a minority with empathy and understanding?

**Curriculum review:**

Science: next time you are looking at your curriculum, have a look at diversity in all subjects. In science, do you make a point of telling your pupils about inspirational BME scientists?

<https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/diversity-in-science/inspiring-scientists/>

Resources: Have a look at your school library. Do your books reflect your aim to promote diversity and celebrate difference? Do your resources in all classes give pupils opportunities to encounter diversity? Posters on walls? Book corner? Home corner? Dolls? Small world?

Literature: What about texts? Poetry from around the world? Literature from around the world?

Music: What music do you play at the start of a collective worship? Do pupils get to experience music from around the world? Do they see BME Christians? Which artists do you study in music lessons? Do you look into the heritage of those artists and what has shaped their music?

Sport: do you look for BME role models to show your pupils during PE lessons? Footballers? Track and field athletes? Rugby players? The list is endless!

Make it a conscious decision in your school. Flood your pupils with positive BME influences across the whole curriculum.

**Information sharing from the Diocese:**

**Staffing:** BME school staff are underrepresented in Cumbria and school leaders even more so. How could we as a County and a Diocese be challenging this? How can we encourage BME applicants? How could we support them in a challenging role if they are appointed? Where is your school currently in the quadrant chart below and how could you move your school into the next quadrant? What could we, as a Diocese, do to support you in this journey? Would you like to be part of a working party? Would your cluster like to make this a priority?

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| --- | --- |
| **Engaged*** BME staff are represented at all levels
 | **Experimenting*** Few BME staff in posts
* Fewer BME staff in leadership roles
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| **Uninitiated*** No framework in place to meet legal duty
* No BME staff in posts
 | **Initiated*** Framework in place to meet legal duty
* Few BME staff in posts; none in senior roles
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**Source:** Miller (2016) ‘White sanction’, institutional, group and individual interaction in the promotion and progression of black and minority ethnic academics and teacher in England, *Power & Education, p. 13*

**You as a leader:** in the busyness of school life it is easy to lose site of your own vision or to find time to take on yet **another** fight. The following typology of school leaders is provided for you to use as you wish in reflecting on where you are as a leader and what you might like your next steps to be. If you would like to discuss this or need any support, do not hesitate to contact Charlotte or Vanessa in strictest confidence.

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| **Indifferent** |
|  | ‘Racism/race discrimination is not a problem in our school’; tackling racism is not important enough to be a key performance indicator (KPI) for staff/school |
| **Sympathiser** |
| **Passive** | It is acknowledged that there is a problem but no active steps are taken to address it or it is argued that what is needed to address it is unknown; no help is sought to tackle it; racism is not important enough to be a KPI |
| **Performative** | Racism is acknowledged as a problem; there is a commitment to helping but investment is minimal; intervention is usually to solve immediate issues; tackling generic racism is not important enough to be a KPI |
| **Activist** |
| **Accidental** | Racism is acknowledged as a problem; there is commitment to some kind of change or intervention to tackling it; the outcome may or may not be known; the plan may not be clear but commitment is clear; tackling racism is important; could be treated as a KPI |
| **Deliberate** | Racism is acknowledged as a problem; there is a personal commitment to change; resources – financial, human and time are committed to devising planning interventions which are monitored and accounted for; tackling racism is a KPI |

**Source:** Miller (2020) Anit-racist school leadership: making race count in leadership preparation and development,

*Professional Development in Education, p.12*





**Thursday 26th November, 6.30pm – 8pm**

**Training Session:** **Delivering Collective Worship and RE in schools**

A training session for your volunteers: governors, church teams, clergy to help them to support you. We will be joined by some volunteers and Diocesan employees who already work with schools to share their top tips and things they wished someone had told them when they started out. Do encourage your volunteers to join us.

**Monday 7th November, 4pm OR Thursday 10th December, 6.30pm**

**Governor Peer Support Network**

Suitable for **all** governors (including staff, parents and co-opted governors). If you are able to, please do find a photograph (perhaps from your school website) that you are happy to talk about. Perhaps something that demonstrates the school vision, something that encapsulates how the school community has responded to the corona virus or just a picture that sums up the wonderful character of your school. If you are able to email your picture to **education@carlislediocese.org.uk** in advance of the session, we would love to add it to our powerpoint which will inspire and inform our discussions.

To book a place on any of our courses, or for more information, please email **education@carlislediocese.org.uk**

**iSingPOP Christmas Watch Party**

iSingPOP wants to help bring Christmas cheer during these unusual times and have recently launched a FREE online Christmas resource for schools - an iSingPOP Watch Party.  The school is provided with a template with 4 iSingPOP Christmas songs, some animation of the Christmas story with opportunities for the school to add in readings and contributions from the Head and, if appropriate, the local Vicar or a member of the local church.

All this can then be made available to the school community for parents and children to enjoy together at home**.  We’re running two webinars on Thursday 19th December at 11am and 3.30pm.**  The link to sign up is <https://www.isingpop.org/christmas-the-gift>.  We’ve had so many schools contacting us about whether we could do anything for Christmas that we felt we had to provide this ***FREE*** resource for all to be able to access and enjoy.

**Courses & Training Programme 2021**

Our new courses & training programme will be available shortly.

**Save the Date: Annual Conference 23rd June 2021**

**Heads Huddles will continue**

**every Tuesday afternoon at 3.45pm**

**Please join us when you can.**

[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85053449378?pwd=dDBUa3NKdXozVHJoeWxnUUNab2FKQT09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85053449378?pwd=dDBUa3NKdXozVHJoeWxnUUNab2FKQT09)