

Commonswood Primary & Nursery School Preventing and Dealing with Racist Incidents



Approved by Governors: Spring 2026
Next Review: Annual

Purpose

All members of the school community (pupils, staff, governors, parents and visitors) have a right not to experience racism in school, whether or not this is directed at them. Commonswood Primary & Nursery School values all children and seeks to ensure that they learn that challenging hurtful behaviour and discrimination is an important part of their education.

Racism is evident in wider society therefore inevitably will occur in schools. Commonswood Primary & Nursery School will work actively to:

- Develop a climate which is intolerant to racism
- Ensure an atmosphere in which all pupils feel valued and listened to and have confidence that their concerns will be addressed

Pupils are taught about racism, that it is unacceptable and that it diminishes all. As a school we recognise and value diversity by ensuring that:

- All pupils have an equal and strong sense of belonging within the school community
- Racist incidents, are dealt with effectively and recorded and reported to the Governing Board
- Pupils from different ethnic and faith and cultural backgrounds mix and get on well with each other

What is a racist incident?

Schools are required to use the following definition for recording and responding to racist incidents:

‘Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or by any other person’

The Home Office Code of Practice explains that:

‘The purpose of definition ... is to ensure that investigations take full account of the possibility of a racist dimension to the incident and that statistics of such incident are collected on a uniform basis.’

In recording all incidents, the school is able to:

- Demonstrate that they have dealt satisfactorily with incidents
- Monitor trends patterns of behaviour if they exist
- Take preventative action against racism which may come into the school from society in general
- Provide good educational responses to any behaviour that is of concern

Consequently, any incident which is perceived by anyone to be racist will be investigated, recorded and monitored as such.

In investigating any incident, the school will be seeking to establish whether any behaviour, language or expression has occurred which has caused harm or offence in relation to colour, religion, ethnic or cultural group. In some instances, it may be found that the motivation was to cause harm or offence, in others it may have been unintentional, but both would still be recorded and reported.

Intentional racist behaviour will be dealt with differently to unintentional incidents. For example, younger pupils may unwittingly use different language which they do not understand and did not intend.

It is important to note that racist incidents and racist bullying can be subtle and may not always be racially explicit. These kinds of incidents can be just as damaging to victims as explicit racism. Pupils may also suspect the motives and intent of their fellow pupils when acceptable language is being used. It should be noted that under the prescribed definition, racist incidents can occur without a victim or target being present, for example telling a racist joke or making derogatory remarks about a particular ethnic community. Such incidents will also be recorded and resolved. Some racist incidents involve allegations that the school itself has failed to provide equal and fair opportunities or treatment to individuals or groups based on their colour, culture, ethnicity or religion. Where such an allegation is made, this too will be investigated and recorded as a racist incident.

Racist incidents may include: (this list is not exhaustive)

- Threatening and actual physical assault
- Verbal abuse, name calling (including online)
- Racist graffiti (on school walls, books, furniture)
- Distributing racist literature
- Damage to property
- Wearing of symbols belonging to a known racist organisation
- Teasing in relation to language, colour, religion or cultural background
- Expressions of prejudice used to offend or to influence the behaviour of others
- Intimidation
- Isolation and spreading of rumours
- Inappropriate and hurtful humour

This policy is fully consistent with and should be considered alongside the school's Behaviour & Anti-Bullying policy but also complies with legal requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 for identifying and responding to racist incidents. Race is one of 9 protected characteristics covered by discrimination law (Equality Act 2010) Race discrimination includes direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Roles and responsibilities

A member of the senior leadership team will investigate incidents. The headteacher will oversee the application of the policy across the school. The effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed by the governing body.

All staff are involved in monitoring and dealing with racist incidents.

Teachers wherever necessary will:

- Immediately address any pupils' negative stereotyping or racist response to difference related to colour, culture or ethnicity
- Provide support to any pupil who has experienced offence from another person
- Refer any incidents to a senior member of staff for investigation and resolution
- Provide educational responses to ensure that pupils develop the knowledge and skills necessary for living in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-faith society

All staff will be vigilant at all times and open to pupils concerns about experiences of racism, being ready to listen and take reports seriously. Distressed pupils will be supported, and all incidents reported to the appropriate member of staff.

Expectations of pupils

All pupils, as appropriate to their age and understanding, have a responsibility for promoting a harmonious school community and challenging and or reporting racist and other hurtful behaviours.

Expectations of parents/carers

In accepting a place at the school, parents/carers take a broad acceptance of school policies and procedures. Commonswood Primary & Nursery School always take parents' concerns seriously. However, the school can only respond to incidents drawn to our attention. Parents are expected to ensure that their children display appropriate and acceptable behaviour in and out of school with their peers. When problems arise in school, we will seek the support of all relevant parents in ensuring their children understand where and why offence has been caused and what change is necessary to adhere to the principles of race equality.

Preventing incidents

All adults in children's lives have a part to play in teaching anti-racism. It is vital that parents and school actively educate their children that racism is unacceptable.

Our aim is to empower pupils to explore the ways in which learning about racism can help us to challenge the unequal systems that surround us in society, respect each other and actively stand up to racism.

In addition to the personal, social, health education (PSHE) curriculum, pupils learn an anti-abuse curriculum. This comes under 7 main headings. We teach each aspect through a whole school focus approach.

- Identity
- Resilience & wellbeing
- Character & personal values
- Diversity & community
- Keeping safe, knowing what is not okay & restoring safety
- Body & relationship safety
- Critical thinking

This ensures that pupils are prepared to follow British laws and live in modern Britain. The anti-abuse curriculum progression can be found on the school's website.

Responding to incidents

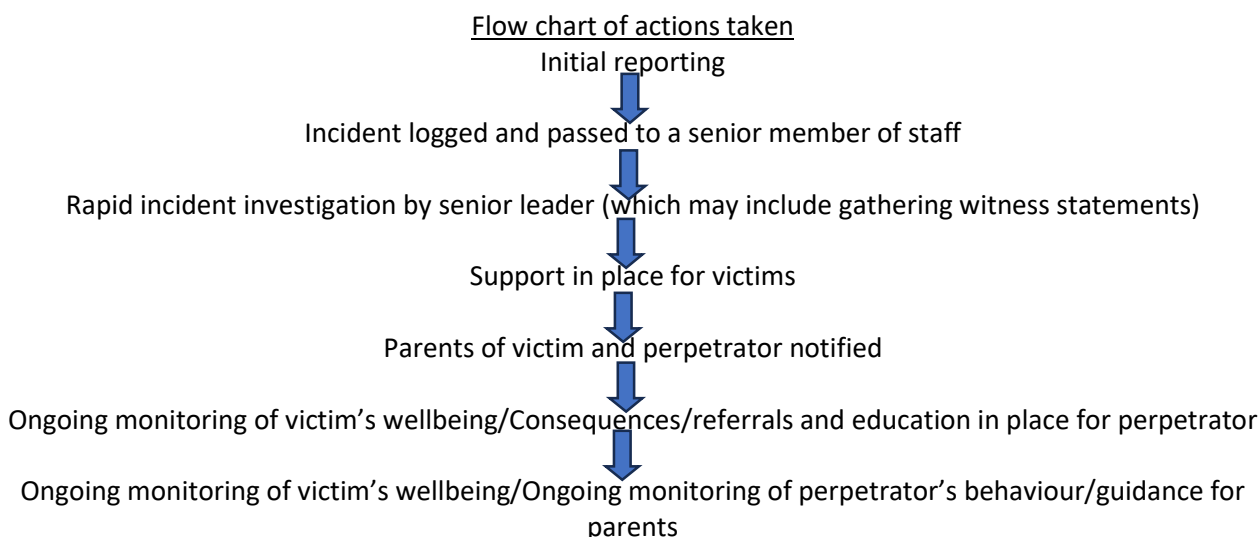
In responding to incidents that may occur, the school will aim to:

- Investigate incidents
- Provide appropriate, timely support and education for all those involved
- Deal with any unacceptable behaviour
- Educate to prevent any further incidents of racism
- Re-establish good race relations across the school

The cause of offence will be identified, and an educational response provided. Where the incident was intentionally motivated, perpetrators will be subject to disciplinary procedures. Repeated incidents could result in serious consequences in line with the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policy. Where the incident has been identified as unintentional, pupils will need to understand how offence was caused and be supported to make any changes necessary in their behaviour. A high priority will be placed on resolving any breakdown in relationships and ensuring that pupils can repair relationships.

Pupils who have experienced racism and their parents will be kept informed throughout the investigation and resolution of the incident.

Isolation, ostracising or refusal to work or sit with another pupil can be dealt with by removing the perpetrator. If in resolving incidents it becomes appropriate to intervene to separate pupils to ensure that incidents do not continue, or to facilitate a fresh start with new relationships, it should be the perpetrator and not the target that should be removed.



Recording and reporting incidents

All incidents are recorded. Oppressive incidents such as bullying, racism and homophobic behaviour are reported to the Governing Body and Local Authority. The Local Authority is notified of suspensions and exclusion resulting from racist incidents. Serious incidents will be referred to appropriate external agencies.

Policy review

In reviewing the effectiveness of this policy, staff, parents and governors will consider:

- The feelings of victims (and their parents) on the satisfaction of the support received and the resolution of incidents
- Whether the action taken successfully prevented repeat incidents
- The willingness of pupils and parents to draw their concerns to the attention of the school
- The consistency of response and confidence of all staff in following the policy and procedures
- Underlying causes for any rise in numbers of incidents, whether these were preventable and if further action or change in policy is necessary

Linked policies /documents

Behaviour & Anti-Bullying policy
Keeping Children Safe in Education
Governors' Statement of Behaviour Principles
Aims & Values
Home School Agreement
PSHE Policy and Scheme of Work
eSafety & Data Security Policy
Equality Scheme
SEN/D Policy
SEN/D Information report
Mental health and behaviour in schools DFE March 2016
Race Relations Act 1976
Equality Act 2010)

Racist Incident Form

All racist incidents, intentional and unintentional must be recorded and investigated and reported to the Governing Body.

Those involved:

Target/distressed person(s) (including ethnicity)	Perpetrator(s) (including ethnicity)
Witnessed by:	

Description of incident:

Give a precise account including context, place, time and any eyewitnesses. Attach any further information including statements from target and perpetrator.

<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Repeated incident (circle):</td> <td style="width: 35%; text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="width: 35%; text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </table>			Repeated incident (circle):	Yes	No
Repeated incident (circle):	Yes	No			

Tick those applicable:

Isolation/ignoring/spreading of rumours	
Teasing	
General expressions of prejudice/stereotype	
Racist language/verbal abuse/name calling	
Targeted graffiti/use of racist symbols	
Threatening/intimidating behaviour	
Online/phone/camera bullying/harassment	
Physical assault	
Distributing racist literature	
Inappropriate and hurtful humour	
Damage to property	
Expressions of prejudice used to offend or to influence the behaviour of others	
Wearing of symbols belonging to a known racist organisation	
Other (specify)	

