



Holtsmere End Junior School
Policy for Preventing and Dealing with Racist Incidents
Summer 2023
To be reviewed Summer 2024

Introduction

All members of the school community (staff, pupils, parents and visitors) have a right not to experience racism at school, whether or not this is directed at them.

Holtsmere End Junior School values all children and seeks to ensure that they learn that challenging hurtful behaviour and discrimination is an important part of the school ethos.

Racism is evident in wider society and therefore inevitably will occasionally occur within schools. Racist incidents can occur in any school setting, including this one.

In Holtsmere End Junior School we work actively

- to develop a climate which is intolerant to racism,
- to 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 us all.

As a school we aim to recognise and value diversity by ensuring that

- all pupils have an equal and strong sense of belonging within the school community
- there are few racist incidents and these are dealt with effectively
- pupils from different ethnic and faith 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 any other person".

The Home Office Code of Practice explains that, "The purpose of the definition ... is to ensure that investigations take full account of the possibility of a racist dimension to the incident and that statistics of such incidents are collected on a uniform basis".

In recording incidents under this definition, it is not the intention to label individuals as racist. Records of incidents are held centrally in the school and not on individual children's or adults' records.

By recording all incidents the school is able to:

- demonstrate that they have dealt satisfactorily with incidents
- monitor trends and 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. This designation does not necessarily mean that racism has occurred.

In investigating any incident as defined above 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, culture, ethnic group or religion. In some incidents 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. Intentionally racist behaviour will be dealt with differently to unintentional incidents. For example, younger pupils may unwittingly use offensive 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 perfectly acceptable language is being used. **Importantly, wherever offence is caused it needs to be understood and resolved, and where it concerns elements related to colour, culture, ethnicity or religion it will be recorded as a racist incident.**

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 on the basis of their colour, culture, ethnicity or religion. Where such an allegation is made this too will be recorded and investigated as a racist incident.

Racist incidents may include*:

- Threatened or actual physical assault
- Verbal abuse
- Racist graffiti (on school furniture, walls or books)
- Distributing racist literature
- Wearing of badges or symbols belonging to known racist organisation
- Name calling
- Teasing in relation to language, religion or cultural background
- Expressions of prejudice calculated to offend or to influence the behaviour of others
- Intimidation
- Isolation and spreading of rumours
- Inappropriate and hurtful humour

* *N.B. This list is not exhaustive*

This policy is fully consistent with and should be considered alongside the school's policy on anti-bullying but also complies with additional legal requirements for identifying and responding to racist incidents.

Roles and responsibilities

1. The head teacher is the member of staff responsible for investigating incidents where this is required, for overseeing the application of the policy across the school, for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and for reporting to governors. A designated governor and the Teaching and Learning Committee work closely with the head teacher in this regard.
2. All staff are involved in dealing with racist incidents and maintaining good race relations.
3. Teachers wherever necessary will
 - immediately address any pupil's negative, stereotyped or racist response to difference related to culture, colour or ethnicity
 - provide support to any pupil who has experienced offence from another person
 - refer language or behaviour that has been hurtful to the head teacher for further 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
4. All staff will be vigilant at all times and open to pupils' concerns about experiences of racism, being ready to listen and to take reports seriously. Distressed pupils will be supported and all incidents reported on 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. (It is understood however that it may be difficult for pupils who are the targets of racism to report it.)

Expectations of parents

We always take parents' concerns seriously. However, the school can only respond to incidents that are drawn to their attention.

Parents are expected to ensure that their children display appropriate and acceptable behaviour in and out of school with their school fellows. When problems arise in school we will seek the support of all parents in ensuring their children understand where and why offence has been caused and what, if any, change might be necessary to adhere to the school's race equality policies.

Responding to incidents

1. In responding to incidents that may occur the school will aim
 - to provide appropriate support to pupils
 - to deal with any unacceptable behaviour,
 - to prevent racism and discrimination and
 - to re-establish good race relations across the school.
2. Support will be given to anyone who has experienced offence. Their concerns will be listened to.
3. An investigation will look into the details of what has occurred.
4. The cause of offence will be clearly identified and an educational response provided where appropriate.

5. Where offence was intentional pupils will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Where offence was 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 by the school on resolving any breakdown in relationships and ensuring that pupils can move on positively from the experience.

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

Recording and Reporting Incidents

As required variously by the Local Authority and Home Office Code of Practice:

1. All incidents will be recorded, including the date, the names and ethnicity of the perpetrators and victims, the nature of the incident, and action taken in response.

2. Where racist incidents occur which involve any of the following, the advice of the relevant Local Authority adviser will be sought :

- physical violence or serious damage to property
- repeated or orchestrated harassment, including text messaging and cyber bullying
- links with extremist groups, including distributing of racist literature
- racist graffiti
- absence related to a racist incident
- exclusion related to a racist incident

3. On an annual basis the school will report numbers of incidents to Hertfordshire Children's Schools & Families (CSF). Individuals will not be identified in this process.

Performance indicators for preventing and dealing with racist incidents

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

- the feelings of victims (and their parents) on the satisfaction of the support received and the resolution of incidents
- the continued good progress and high self esteem of those who have been offended
- the continued good progress and high self esteem of those who have caused offence
- whether the action taken successfully prevented repeat incidents
- the willingness of pupils (and parents) to draw their concerns to the attention of staff
- the consistency of response and confidence of all staff in following school policy
- whether good race relations are being maintained in the school community
- underlying causes for any rise in numbers of incidents, whether these were preventable and if further action or change in policy and practice is now necessary

Where review indicates that change is needed, policy and practice will be amended as part of the school plan.