

Request:

By letter of 30 September 2009, The Secretary of State Ed Balls appointed Maurice Smith to enquire into the "promotion of racism in schools". Part of the review is aimed at determining whether members of the British National Party (BNP) should be allowed to work as teachers or in the wider school workforce. At present there are a number of measures and safeguards in place in place to protect children and young people in schools from racially motivated discrimination and the promotion of political doctrines that advocate discrimination and promote racist views. These are: . The requirement on schools to have equal opportunity policies . The duty upon schools to promote racial equality . Their duty to promote community cohesion . The duty on governing bodies, headteachers and local authorities to forbid the teaching of partisan political activities in schools . The powers of the GTC (England) regarding suitability of registration and where teacher conduct could bring the profession into disrepute I would like you to provide me with evidence of how effective these measures are including whether they are sufficient to maintain trust in the profession and protect children and young people. Please provide the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

1) What evidence is there that schools' equal opportunity policies are effective in combating racism?

All Schools have in place guidance on Equality of Opportunity in Schools and specifically relating to Racial Equality. Schools also have in place an incident reporting process for all incidents of Racism in schools. A National Campaign to support awareness raising, discussion and learning and also reporting in Schools has also been in place for some considerable time. This campaign is run Nationally and supported by a number of high profile individuals from the sporting profession. This scheme is referred to as 'Show Racism the Red Card' and is promoted and supported within Schools.

Since the 2002 Campaign was launched all schools have collected data on racial incidences in Schools. The data below notes that initially the number of incidences reported was relatively low, but in later years as the National Campaign has grown, The Equality Duty has been built more into the National Curriculum and as Schools have encouraged more reporting the statistical numbers have changed.

2002-03 - 28 incidences reported
2003-04 - 23 incidences reported
2004-05 - 31 incidences reported
2005-06 - 27 incidences reported
2006-07 - 116 incidences reported
2007-08 - 97 incidences reported
2008-09 - 96 incidences reported

In addition, Guidance was sent to schools in 2002 regarding Racial Equality Duty for Education Providers, copy enclosed.

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What are schools in your area doing to promote racial equality and promote community cohesion? Examples of measures deemed to be good practice and recognised as being successful would be useful.

Additional guidance has been sent to schools on Equality & Diversity including the 6 Equality duties (gender, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation and age). This was sent to Schools in September 2009 the aim of which was to help schools produce their own individual Equality & Diversity whole school policy, with specific reference to community cohesion and referring to both staff and pupils. (Again a copy can be provided if this is thought to be beneficial).

Schools have in place as part of the National Curriculum a PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education) programme, which includes diversity and equality issues. Schools also have in place zero tolerance of bullying and do curriculum work around this. Schools also have in place policies on anti racism and again do curriculum work including this. In addition to this, schools can also choose to follow a SEALS programme, which focuses on the social and emotional aspects of learning including attitudes and behaviour, etc.

The Race Equality Scheme developed by each school is recommended to be reviewed every 2-3 years in line with current Equality legislation. This would allow schools to identify reduction in racial incidents etc as evidence/research as part of this process. Additionally, the new Equality Impact Assessment guidance for schools (which is in draft but to be launched soon) refers to schools using data and research available to them to identify the impact of new policies, procedures, strategies etc. This could also identify reduction in racial incidents/effectiveness in combating racism, but obviously would be dependent upon research and data available to the specific school.

2) Can you provide me with any evidence that the measures listed above have been effective (if this has not already been done)?

The number of incidences reported in schools has since altered since 2002, and peaked in 2006 – this variation is seen as a positive as individuals are able to better identify and report incidences of a racial nature. This in turn allows Schools to address those issues directly, and also to undertake further actions to prevent such incidences occurring in the future. Such actions include working directly with those individuals who have reported or been involved with each incidence and as each situation requires, allows the school to review the findings/learning from each incident ensuring that further training, awareness raising and protocols are implemented as appropriate.

On-line awareness training has been designed and implemented in Schools during 2009. This online training has been undertaken by key representatives from within schools, including Headteachers, Senior Leadership teams and Governors to enable them to use

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this within the day to day management and strategic leadership of the school as well as cascade it to all staff.

3) Are further measures required to either maintain trust in the teaching profession or protect children and young people?

This question asks for opinion, and is therefore outside the remit of the Freedom of Information Act, however we can reply as follows:

Single Equality Scheme planned for later in 2010. This will enable schools to develop, consult upon and publish an equality scheme and action plan in relation to Race, Disability, Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation & Religion and Belief.

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