

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School



Policy for Preventing and Dealing with Racist Incidents

Autumn 2019

Statement

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School recognises and values diversity within the school and wider community. 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.

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.

At Coates Way School, we work actively to develop a climate which is intolerant to racism and 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 and that it is unacceptable.

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School strives to ensure that:

- all pupils and staff have a strong sense of belonging
- pupils from different ethnic and faith backgrounds mix and get on well together
- the wider school community, including different faith groups, is actively involved in the life of the school and enrich school diversity
- all members of the school community (pupils, staff, parents and visitors) do not encounter racism at school, whether or not this is directed at them
- all pupils learn that challenging hurtful behaviour and discrimination is important. Pupils are taught about racism, that it is unacceptable and that it diminishes us all.

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School works actively to:

- develop a climate which reduces racist incidents to a minimum
- ensure all pupils feel valued and have confidence that their concerns will be listened to and addressed.

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School strives to:

- eliminate racist incidents
- challenge discriminatory practices
- ensure that every single racist incident is dealt with effectively

What is a racist incident?

Schools are required to use the following definition of a racist incident:

"any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person".

The Race Relations Act 1976, amended 2000, 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".

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

Any incident which is perceived by anyone to be racist will be investigated, recorded and monitored as such. In recording incidents under this definition, it is not the intention to label individuals as racist. This designation does not necessarily mean that racism has occurred.

Recording process

By recording all incidents Coates Way JMI and Nursery School is able to:

- demonstrate that they have dealt satisfactorily with racist incidents
- monitor trends and patterns of behaviour
- monitor literature, graffiti and other forms of racism
- take preventative action against any recurrence
- provide good educational responses to any discriminatory behaviour that is of concern to the school.

Investigation Process

While investigating any incident, the school will be seeking to establish whether any perceived racist behaviour, language, literature or expression has occurred which has caused harm or offence.

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. Every such incident will be recorded and investigated 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.

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.

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, responsibilities and expectations

1. **The Headteacher/Assistant Headteachers** are the members of staff responsible for:
 - investigating incidents and ensuring they are recorded properly, using the appropriate forms
 - overseeing the application of the policy across the school
 - monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and reporting to governors and the Governing Body.

The governors of the Resource Committee work closely with the Headteacher in this regard.

2. All staff will:

- maintain vigilance for signs of racist incidents
- listen to pupils' concerns about and experiences of racism and take reports seriously
- be sensitive to pupils with concerns and support distressed pupils
- report concerns swiftly to the appropriate member of staff, usually the Headteacher or Assistant Headteachers
- champion good race relations in accordance with the Race Equality Policy
- address immediately 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 headteacher 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

3. 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.

4. Expectations of parents

- We always take parents' concerns seriously although 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.

5. Expectations of service contractors

Service contractors are expected to display appropriate and acceptable behaviour in and out of school in accordance with the School's race Equality Policy.

Responding to a perceived racist incident

In responding to a perceived racist incident that may occur the school will:

- a. provide appropriate support to pupils
- b. deal with any unacceptable behaviour,
- c. prevent racism and discrimination
- d. re-establish good race relations across the school.

The incident will be investigated, following these stages:

Initial investigation:

- Give support to anyone who has experienced offence and listen to their concerns.
- Gather detailed evidence about what has occurred.

Planned response:

- Identify the cause of the offence.
- Decide on appropriate action to take to deal with the matter.
- Reflect on the necessary response.

Resolution:

Enact the appropriate response, ensuring:

- victims' concerns are addressed
- disciplinary action is proportionate
- remedial action is taken to ensure no recurrence

Ongoing action:

- Maintain vigilance to monitor the situation
- Plan any adjustments to policy and procedures.
- Details will be recorded at each stage in accordance with the Racist Incident Policy.
- Pupils who have experienced racism and their parents will be kept informed throughout the investigation and resolution of the incident. Parents of perpetrators must also be informed at all stages.
- Governors will be involved at all stages for serious incidents and will be made aware of outcomes the in minor incidents.

Outcomes

Intentional 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.

- ✓ Where an offence was intentional pupils will be subject to disciplinary procedures.
- ✓ Where an offence was unintentional pupils will be helped to understand how the offence was caused and be supported to make any changes necessary in their behaviour.

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.

Recording and Reporting Incidents

- As required by the Race Relations Act 2000, 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.
- A standard form will be used to record each incident.
- Records of incidents will be held centrally in the school and not on individual children's or adults' records.

- Significant details of conversations will be agreed and a summary recorded - it is good practice for this to be shared with the person involved especially in serious incidents
- If incidents come to the notice of the press extreme sensitivity must be observed and HCC Press Office may be involved.
- The advice of the relevant Local Authority adviser will be sought if racist incidents occur which involve any of the following,
 - physical violence or serious damage to property
 - repeated or orchestrated harassment, including text messaging or 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
- 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.
- On a termly basis the headteacher will report numbers of incidents to the Resource Committee and serious concerns will be referred to the Governing Body.

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.